THEATRICAL BIOGRAPHY:

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF THE

PRINCIPAL PERFORMERS

OF THE

Three Theatres Royal.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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DRURY-LANE,

Mr. GARRICK,	Mr. KING,	Mr. VERNON,
Mr. BARRY,	Mr. MOODY,	Mr. PARSONS,
Mr. REDDISH,	Mr. DODD,	Mr. BADDELY,
Mr. AICKIN,	Mr. LOVE,	
Mrs. BARRY,	Miſs HAYWARD,	Mrs. EGERTON,
Mrs. ABINGTON,	Mrs. BADDELY,	Mrs. W. BARRY,
Miſs YOUNGE,	Miſs POPE,	Mrs. JEFFERIES,

COVENT-GARDEN.

Mr. ROSS,	Mr. YATES,	Mr. BENSLY,
Mr. SMITH,	Mr. SHUTER,	Mr. MATTOCKS,
Mr. SAVIGNY.	Mr. DYER,	Mr. CLARK,
Mr. WOODWARD,		
Mrs. YATES,	Miſs MACKLIN,	Mrs. GREEN,
Mrs. MATTOCKS.	Mrs. BULKLEY,	Mrs. THOMPSON,

HAY-MARKET.

Mr. FOOTE,	Mr. J. AICKIN,	Mr. DAVIES,
Mr. WESTON,	Mr. DIDIER,	
Mrs. GARDNER,	Mrs. JEWEL,	Mrs. DIDIER.

TOGETHER WITH

Critical and *impartial* Remarks on their reſpective profeſſional Merits.

VOL. I.

LONDON Printed; and DUBLIN Re-printed for H. SAUNDERS, E. LYNCH, W. SLEATER, D. CHAMBERLAINE, J. POTTS, J. WILLIAMS, W. WILSON, R. MONCRIEFFE, T. WALKER, L. FLIN, and C. JENKIN.

M DCC LXXII

BRITISH MUSEUM

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a ſtrong propenſity in human nature, to be acquainted with the private anecdotes of thoſe perſons who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in public characters; from whatever ſource this ſprings, whether from the pleaſure we take in dwelling on the little incidents of perſons, whoſe profeſſions bring them more forward to view, or from common curioſity, the paſſion ſeems to be pretty generally implanted, and ſeeks the gratification. "We are "fond," ſays a modern ingenious author, "of talking of thoſe who have "given us pleaſure; not that we have "any thing important to ſay, but be-"cauſe the ſubject is pleaſing."

In the whole catalogue of public profeſſions, none have engaged general curioſity ſo much as the theatre: miniſters of ſtate, have indeed long been a favourite topic with many, but then this is confined to a certain ſet, whilſt the ſtage, like a game of chance, engages the attention of all. Notwithſtanding this general avidity in preference to the theatre, we have *never* yet ſeen curioſity ſufficiently gratified on this head; the preſs, indeed, has ſwarmed for theſe laſt twenty years paſt, with ſtrictures, in verſe and proſe, on the merits of theatrical performers; and ſatire has been alternately whetted and blunted by the productions of a Churchill, and a *gentleman* under the character of Sir Nicolas Nipcloſe. But all ſuch have, at beſt, done little more than echo back the opinions of our fore-fathers, by attaching modern names to the elements of criticiſm; hence all that poſterity will be able to judge from them is, that Garrick was an actor in the ſame walk of Betterton; Weſton in that of Nokes, &c. &c. without ever being acquainted with a ſingle virtue or vice, out of the line of their reſpective departments.

To

To open a *new* view (and we flatter ourſelves, not altogether an *uninſtructive* one) to public curioſity, we have given in the following ſheets, THE MEMOIRS OF ALL THE PRINCIPAL PERFORMERS OF THE THREE THEATRES ROYAL; and to make this as copious and ſatisfactory as poſſible, we have ſubjoined to the life of each performer, the moſt candid and critical obſervations on his profeſſional merit, we could poſſibly form; though in the whole of this work, we have been at leaſt *original*, we derive our principal merit from *impartiality*; biaſſed by no ſtage connexions, prejudiced by no theatrical diſappointments, we have neither been *afraid* "to hold the mirror up to nature," nor *aſhamed* to differ from the too often miſtaken approbation of an audience; we are ſenſible, however, that ſome objections will be made to the ſtrong colouring that runs through ſeveral of the characters; we have already accounted with ourſelves for this, as where is the galled jade that will not wince? To ſuch, therefore, we ſhall only reply in the words of Mr. Congreve, when aſked by a court Lady, why, in his comedies, he made ſo free with the ſex? "Becauſe Madam,"

Madam," ſaid the bard, "I draw my "characters from *nature*."

P. S. Since theſe volumes went to preſs, ſome few alterations have taken place, which are neceſſary to be noticed. Mr. Woodward was at that time diſengaged from Covent-garden theatre, which accounts for his being ſo far back in the liſt of the performers of that houſe; his very extraordinary merit as an actor, demanding the preference. Mrs. Jefferies has retired to Ireland; Mrs. Baddely to love and enjoyment; and Mrs. W. Barry to that ſpot "where the righteous reſt from their labours;" we have preſerved the memoirs of this laſt Lady, for the ſake of doing juſtice to her memory.

CON-

CONTENTS.

The several LIVES in each Volume.

A

	Vol.	Page.
ABINGTON, Mrs.	I.	8
Aickin, F.	I.	73
Aickin, J.	II.	93

B

Barry, Mr.	I.	60
Barry, Mrs.	I.	1
Barry, Mrs. W.	I.	41
Bulkley, Mrs.	II.	15
Benfley, Mr.	II.	59
Baddely, Mrs.	I.	23
Baddely, Mr.	I.	102

C

Clark, Mr.	II.	68

Dyer,

CONTENTS.

	Vol.	Page.
D		
Dyer, Mr. — —	II.	47
Didier, Mrs. — —	II.	81
Didier, Mr. — —	II.	99
Davies, Mr. — —	II.	103
Dodd, Mr. — —	I.	82
E		
Egerton, Mrs. —	I.	35
F		
Foote, Mr. — —	II.	84
G		
Garrick, Mr. — —	I.	52
Green, Mrs. — —	II.	19
Gardner, Mrs. — —	II.	75
H		
Hayward, Miſs — —	I.	20
I		
Jefferies, Mrs. — —	I.	46
Jewell, Mrs. — —	II.	77

King,

CONTENTS.

	Vol.	Page.
K		
King, Mr. — — —	I.	77
L		
Love, Mr. — — —	I.	91
M		
Moody, Mr. — —	I.	86
Macklin, Miſs, — —	II.	8
Mattocks, Mrs. — — —	II.	11
Mattocks, Mr. — — —	II.	64
P		
Pope, Miſs — —	I.	30
Parſons, Mr. — —	I.	99
R		
Reddiſh, Mr. — —	I.	66
Roſs, Mr. — —	II.	27
S		
Shuter, Mr — —	II.	40
Savigny, Mr. — — —	II.	36
Smith, Mr. — —	II.	32
T		
Thompſon, Mrs. —	II.	22

Vernon,

CONTENTS.

Vol. Page.

V

Vernon, Mr. — — — I. 94

W

Woodward, Mr. — — — II. 51
Weſton, Mr. — — II. 89

Y

Yates, Mrs. — — — II. 3
Yates, Mr. — — — II. 44
Young, Miſs, — — I. 16

Theatrical Biography, &c.

DRURY-LANE.

Mrs. BARRY.

AS it is uſual, in mixed companies, to pay our *firſt* addreſſes to the ladies, we think ourſelves under the indiſpenſible neceſſity of preſerving that *etiquette* in the courſe of theſe memoirs;—did not the laws of *breeding* eſtabliſh this ceremony, we would reſt it on thoſe of *inclination*; for when *beauty* and *merit* are ſeen in the croud, who can reſiſt paying them a priority of diſtinction? Having ſaid thus much, we ſhall beg leave to introduce to our reader's acquaintance the ladies of Drury-lane theatre, amongſt whom, even *female envy*, we believe, will allow Mrs. Barry to take the lead.

This lady was born at Bath in the year 1734, and is the daughter of a gentleman, an eminent apothecary in that town; who preferring

temporary gratifications to the future proſpects of his family, gave into all the expences of that faſhionable place; ſo that though his profeſſion was extenſive, it was at leaſt balanced by his expences. Mrs. Barry, from her childhood, amidſt many promiſing qualifications, expreſſed a warm preference for theatrical amuſements, which, joined to a figure pleaſingly feminine, great natural ſweetneſs of temper, and the faſhionable ſtation ſhe filled, made her, as ſhe grew up, an object of general attachment.

When ſhe was about ſeventeen years of age, ſhe was particularly noticed by a young gentleman of very extenſive fortune, and the brother of a noble lord, who was then at Bath. From ſeeing her only in the rooms, he was ſo ſtruck with her manner, that he contrived to drink tea with her at a third perſon's houſe. Here her converſation eſtabliſhed what her exterior charms had begun, and after a few viſits, he formally aſked permiſſion of the father to become his ſon-in-law. So advantageous an offer was readily embraced by all parties—the parent was flattered with the idea of noble connexions—the daughter with engroſſing the object of her affections.

Whilſt things were in this train of maturation, an unexpected letter arrived, adviſing the lover of the death of an uncle in London, which required his immediate attendance. He unwillingly obeyed, after having pledged his affections for his inſtant return. But alas! how changeable are lovers promiſſes. The air of London ſoon diſſipated his vows, whilſt the ami-

able

ble object of them, after waiting two months n expectation of hearing from him, had no-hing but ſighs and painful recollections to omfort her. The chagrin ſhe was thrown into n this account, ſo viſibly impaired her health, hat it was thought adviſeable by her phyſici-ns to go into the country. A near relation in Yorkſhire made an offer of his houſe, which as accepted; and as people uſually run from ne extreme to another, ſhe entered at firſt with ctitious vivacity into every ſpecies of amuſe-ent, till by degrees ſhe caught the ſprightli-eſs of the place, and perfectly recovered her irits.

Amongſt the amuſements of the country, the orkſhire play-houſe, which was only diſtant a w miles from where ſhe reſided, was not over-oked. An entertainment ſo congenial to her iginal ſentiments, could not eſcape her.—ere ſhe got acquainted with Mr. D—r, who nducted that company;—and whether it was om the irreſiſtible impulſe ſhe had of appear-g on the ſtage (as is generally thought to be e caſe) or the deſire of baniſhing by theſe eans the dear *ingratee*, who might have ſtill ttered about her heart; or any particular *nchant* ſhe had for Mr. D—r; ſhe, after a tle time, married him. Her relations on the ſt news of this, were inconſoleable. Their ry great affection for her, aided by the pride family, determined them on ſeeking every portunity to prevent her diſgracing them by r appearance on the ſtage. To this purpoſe ey firſt prevailed in diſlodging them from ork; and as their diligence did not ſtop here,

wherever the unfortunate couple went, they found themſelves precluded from the benefits of their profeſſion, by an order from the magiſtrates. In this dilemma they turned their thoughts on Ireland, as a clime more favourable for them to enjoy the fruits of their talents :—here then they ſhaped their courſe :—and Mr. Barry and Mr. Woodward being at that time about opening Crow-ſtreet theatre, they readily got admittance at genteel ſalaries.

When Mrs. Barry firſt made her appearance at York, very little was expected from her theatrical abilities ; her *perſon* and *voice* ſeemed the only requiſites in her favour ; and even the *latter*, though naturally melodious, was rendered ſomewhat *flat* by her extraordinary diffidence.

Strange as this may appear, Cibber gives us a more extraordinary account of the celebrated Mrs. Oldfield, who had been *four* years on the ſtage, before ſhe began to be noticed above a *mute* ; and even at that time, when rehearſing with her, he ſays, "He ran over the ſcenes with inadvertency, concluding any aſſiſtance he could give her would be to little purpoſe." Public approbation, however, is the ſunſhine of a theatrical plant, which will ſoon bring it forward to whatever perfection nature has deſigned it. The Dublin audience, perceiving Mrs. Barry poſſeſſed of internal powers, called them out by every little indulgence, which in the courſe of a ſeaſon had ſuch an effect, as to give her a very conſiderable eſtimation as an actreſs.

Whilſt

Whilſt ſhe was thus riſing in the opinion of the town, and rapidly gaining the height of theatrical reputation, it would be forfeiting the preciſion of biography to omit the following anecdote.

There was a dancer on the Dublin ſtage, one Poicteur, who, from the intimacy he had with Mrs. Barry and her huſband, propoſed taking an excurſion into the country with the former, and another lady, for a few days; to which the huſband conſented. She had been away but the ſecond day, when it was rung into the huſband's ear, by ſome malicious perſon, that they went off together. Finding his honour ſo cloſely concerned, he inſtantly purſued them, and, at a little village about twenty miles from town, got intelligence that they were at the principal inn. Here he loſt ſight of his prudence, and ruſhing into the houſe, demanded his wife. Mrs. Barry, who with the other lady and Mr. Poicteur were drinking tea in the dining-room, alarmed at his threats, threw herſelf for protection on the gentleman, who imprudently (as it gave ſome colour of ſuſpicion) locked her up with himſelf in a bed-chamber adjoining. The huſband aſſails the door, and threatens deſtruction to the parties, whilſt the other as reſolutely defended the paſs. However, it was at length broke open; but whether from ſeeing the partner of his heart in diſtreſs, or the fears of meeting the contents of a piſtol, which his antagoniſt held in oppoſition to his, he quietly conducted her out of the room, placed her in a poſt-chaiſe, and drove to town.

This anecdote fed, for a-while, half the tea-tables about that capital with ſcandal. All the little caricature painters were at work, and every news-paper produced a freſh pun or epigram. Among the number that are ſince conſigned to oblivion, the following only is preſerved:

When Roſalind choſe from Champanſi to fly,
None had blam'd, had ſhe pleas'd or her ear, or her eye;
For who for that fair one ſoft pity can feel,
Whoſe paſſion's not fix'd on the head, but the *heel?*
Her firſt choice, 'tis true, ſhew'd corruption of taſte,
But an utter depravity reigns in the laſt.
Then how for her ſenſe or her taſte can we anſwer,
Who *twice* in her life went off with a *Dancer?*

But a greater *apropos* than this happened from mere accident. On the night after her arrival in town, ſhe played Sylvia in the *Recruiting Officer*, where Melinda's firſt ſalutation to her on her appearance is, — "*Welcome to town, couſin Sylvia.*" The houſe inſtantly found out the alluſion, and beſtowed on it all that applauſe uſually given on thoſe occaſions.

Soon after this event her huſband died, and left her in poſſeſſion of every thing but money. She had youth, beauty, and great theatrical merit; nor were the gallant world inſenſible of them. She had many amorous *tendres*; among the reſt, one from a Right Hon. Earl, (Lord K——y) who offered her a *charte blanche*. But theſe offers were rejected with contempt. The Iriſh Roſcius (Mr. Barry) had ſecured her heart; and, like a ſecond Stella, under the vehicle

hicle of tuition ſhe took in the poiſon of love. From this period we find her riſing to the top of her profeſſion. Her proximity with the manager ſecured her all the capital parts; beſide, ſhe received ſuch inſtructions from him in private rehearſals, that, in a little time, ſhe added all his fire to her own ſoftneſs.

Mr. Barry, in the year 1766, finding the management of the Iriſh theatres not turning out to his expectation, rented them on very advantageous terms to Mr. Moſſop, and ſet out for London, where he had a ſummer engagement with Mr Foote at the Opera-houſe in the Hay-market. Othello, a part almoſt forgotten ſince Quin's time, was now much wiſhed for by the public. Mr. Garrick, 'tis true, had played it twice, but whether from not liking it, or not willing to riſque an already ſecured reputation, he had for many years declined it. Mr. Barry's appearance, therefore, in this character, drew crowded audiences; and whilſt the critics allowed him all due praiſe, Mrs. Barry, in Deſdemona (a part, previous to her playing it, conſidered as trifling) was received with equal compliment. The critical world, at this time in mourning for Mrs. Cibber's abilities, revived their drooping ſpirits. They ſaw all her ſoftneſs—all her tones realized; but when ſhe afterwards appeared in Belvidera, Rutland, Monimia, *&c.* in tragedy;—Lady Townly, Beatrice, and Roſalind, in comedy, her theatrical character roſe ſuperior to criticiſm—it claimed admiration!

During this ſeaſon our Engliſh Roſcius ſaw them. Mr. Barry was formerly his antagoniſt

in

in the tented field, therefore he knew the full extent of his powers; but Mrs. Barry was a novelty, and ſuch a one as this ſagacious manager thought could not be purchaſed too dearly;—he therefore engaged them at Drury-lane, where, during the courſe of four ſeaſons, Mrs. Barry has given ſuch repeated proofs of her excellent performance, as indubitably rank her the firſt actreſs on the Engliſh,—perhaps on the European ſtage.

Mrs. FRANCES ABINGTON.

AS to her origin, we are not to ſeek for an immediate deſcent, either from titles or affluence; both, or either, muſt have proved an hindrance to our being ſo often entertained by her in her preſent ſtation, of which ſhe is deſervedly acknowledged one of the foremoſt ornaments. She is, however, deſcended from an antient and honourable family near Norton, in Derbyſhire, where Chriſtopher Barton (the chief of that family) at the acceſſion of William III. left four ſons; one a colonel in that king's army, another a ranger of one of the royal parks, the third a prebendary of Weſtminſter, and the fourth (the youngeſt) was the grandfather of our preſent heroine.—At the age of fourteen ſhe had the misfortune of loſing a tender and indulgent mother, who ſpared no expence in educating a darling daughter, in every ſpecies of improvement that

ſo

ſo young a mind was capable of receiving. On this family diſaſter ſhe was taken into the care of a female relation of her father, the late Mrs. S—k—n, in Sherrard-ſtreet, Golden-ſquare, where ſhe continued near three years; her vivacity and engaging manners making her the favourite of all who had the pleaſure of her acquaintance; and the promiſed bleſſing of a future comfort to her family.

About this period, Miſs R—d, a young lady from Bath, came, under a particular recommendation, to board in the ſame houſe, where ſhe ſoon commenced an intimacy with young Frances, whom ſhe uſed to take frequently with her to ſee plays, and communicated an intention of going upon the ſtage, adviſing the other to do the ſame, as a more preferable ſtate than that of depending on any friend or relation; that ſhe had intereſt enough to introduce her to the ſame manager ſhe was then in treaty with, and doubted not of her ſucceeding.

The propoſal did, by no means, diſpleaſe our young heroine; and from that moment the deſire of commencing actreſs was her conſtant and utmoſt wiſh. While this project was carrying on, Mrs. S—k—n diſcovered, that her Bath acquaintance was not the tighteſt-laced of Diana's train, and had a favourite Endymion in a private corner. This intrigue Miſs R—d had carried on for a conſiderable time with the greateſt ſecrecy, even from her young female companion. On warning being given her to ſeek for other lodgings, ſhe prevailed on Frances to quit her friend's houſe, the bet-

ter to effect the plan of going on the ſtage together;—but gallantries being prevalent in the mind of this fair monitor, ſhe prudently went off with her enamorato, and left her companion (whoſe friends ſhe had deſerted) to ſhift for herſelf in the beſt manner ſhe could.

Thus ſituated, poor Frances was under the predicament of the ſteward in the goſpel; *to work ſhe was not able, to beg ſhe was aſhamed.* Spare then her character, ye cenſuring prudes, if, thus circumſtanced, ſhe fell into errors, which *poverty* perhaps forced *inclination* to commit! That her mind was ſuperior to ſuch, may be readily concluded from her embracing the firſt opportunity to get out of them, which the following favourable event brought about.

The late Mr. Theophilus Cibber, ſon of Colley Cibber, Eſq; poet laureat, a comedian of eminence in his days of proſperity, had obtained a licence of the Lord Chamberlain to exhibit plays for a certain number of nights at the theatre in the Hay-market; to this theatre our heroine was invited to make her firſt appearance;—the character ſhe attempted was that of Miranda in the *Buſy Body*, which ſhe executed with ſuch an amazing ſpirit and propriety, that ſhe received the compliments of many acknowledged connoiſſeurs in theatrical affairs, who had been preſent during the whole exhibition. From that night her alliance proved of great emolument to this occaſional manager, and which he ever after moſt gratefully acknowledged.

The

The reputation which ſhe thus acquired, having reached the ears of the managers o Drury-lane theatre, a recommendation of her abilities met with no difficulty, although at that time particularly full of female performers. As this event turned out ſo agreeable to her on the one hand, on the other it procured her a number of admirers; among which was the ingenious Mr. James Abington, to whom ſhe was ſoon after married: but, on her perceiving that there was but little proſpect of advancing at Drury-lane houſe, as faſt as an impatient deſire of excelling prompted her, through the oppoſing intereſts of Miſs Macklin and Miſs Pritchard, (introduced at this very period, under the warmeſt ſunſhine of theatrical family intereſt, to public favour) ſhe reſolved on repairing to Ireland, whither ſhe was accompanied by her huſband.

To the courteous and hoſpitable inhabitants of that kingdom, ſhe needed no other credentials but the theatrical talents with which ſhe was gifted by nature; and that being called forth by the genial hand of public applauſe on the Dublin ſtage, (the beſt ſeminary for thoſe of London) ſhe not only ſhot forward, but even out-bloomed the faireſt conceived hopes of her excelling in Thalia's department.

In this admired point of view it is not to be wondered, that among a people, one of whoſe characteriſtics is gallantry, many of the young faſhionable gentry and nobility paid their complimentary addreſſes to ſo attractive an object, and to which it is hard for female vanity not to liſten.

Whether

Whether ſhe might have hearkened with too encouraging an indulgence to ſuch addreſſes, or, that the huſband was, by inſinuations from others, or ſuggeſtions from himſelf, induced him to believe ſhe did, is what we cannot aſſert; but it was about that time the huſband began to conceive an antipathy againſt her, which, from her conſciouſneſs of its being undeſerved, ſhe affected to return with equal marks of contempt and indignation, till, by degrees, what was at firſt but a ſemblance in her, became at laſt to be a fixed reality, which, to render immoveable, the alienated partner of her bed gave *new cauſe*; wherefore he and ſhe came to a mutual agreement of having articles of ſeparation drawn up on certain ſtipulated terms.

In this they but imitated the conduct of their ſuperiors; nor, indeed, can there be any valid reaſon urged, why divorced minds, as well as bodies, ſhould be condemned to drag on an odious exiſtence together to their reciprocal torture.

We are now to conſider Mrs. Abington as a ſingle woman, out of her native country, and who, on the diſappearing of her huſband, was environed by a ſtill encreaſing croud of admirers, who now become more eager, as his abſence ſeemed to them to remove all conjugal impediments to their wiſhed for happineſs. In order to rid herſelf of a beſieging groupe, and to enjoy quiet under an honourable protection, (ſince by her very intricate and puzzling ſituation ſhe could not accept any propoſals of matrimony) ſhe

yielded

yielded at laſt to the generous and tender ſolicitations of Mr. N——m, a gentleman of family, fortune, and improved underſtanding, who had made the tour of Europe, and was member of parliament for N——y, in the county of D—n.

This connexion, brought to bear through an approving choice of *the minds on both ſides*, rather than the gratification of any other wiſh, the pleaſure ariſing from this intercourſe, became gradually ſo intenſe, that he delighted in no company ſo much as her's. He enjoyed a ſingular ſatisfaction in reading, explaining, and communicating every kind of cultivation to a mind he found ſo happily diſpoſed to receive, and profit by, his inſtruction.

Mr. N——m, being called to England upon particular buſineſs, our heroine embraced this opportunity of reviſiting her native country; where her vanity was ſoon gratified by a warm invitation from G—k; but then the ſince deceaſed Mr. Pritchard, and the now retired Mrs. Clive (whoſe merit the public are too well acquainted with to need a panegyrick) were poſſeſſed of thoſe parts in which Mrs. Abington had made ſo favourable an impreſſion on the Dublin audience. The widow Belmour, however, which is peculiarly adapted to her ſtile of acting lay open to her, and eſtabliſhed her in the public's judgment, as a valuable reacquiſition to the London theatre; which favourable opinion was corroborated by her exhibiting ſome other characters, ſuch as Araminta, in the *School for Lovers*; Belinda, in *All in the Wrong*, &c.

But

But another occaſional ſlackening, as well as intermiſſion of her theatric advancement, was, Mr. N——m's very infirm ſtate of health, whom ſhe, from a ſenſe of duty and affection, attended to Bath and other places, that might be thought moſt conducive to his recovery; but a conſtitutional *malady*, under which he had laboured from his infancy, at laſt getting the better of his philoſophic reſolution, and threatening him with the approach of that final tribute, which is to be paid at one time or other by all mortal beings, he bethought himſelf of leaving out of the reach of *adverſity*, a faithful friend and companion, who had devoted herſelf to *him*; and whoſe behaviour, during his laſt illneſs, was ſuch as the moſt heroic matron might not be aſhamed to copy after.

His heirs have ſince diſcharged, in a very honourable manner, the proviſion he had made for her; and ſhe has been alſo favoured by the family with a notice that is rarely the conſequence of an attachment of ſuch a nature.

As ſoon as ſhe recovered from her grief for ſuch a loſs, ſhe reſolved to make attaining the ſummit of *comic fame* the ſole object of her future paſſion; and to that end moſt luckily intervened the ſtage's privation of Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. Clive; by which event ſhe has had an opportunity of appearing with eclat in Eſtiphania, *in Rule a Wife and have a Wife*; Mrs. Oakly, in the *Jealous Wife*; Maria, in the *Non-juror*— (now Charlotte, in the *Hypocrite*) the author of which, as well as thoſe of every new piece in which as ſhe has performed, has acknowledged,

acknowledged, that no actreſs ever diſplayed greater proofs of the *vis-comica*.

To the character of an excellent actreſs Mrs. Abington has added all thoſe pleaſing accompliſhments that give the firſt poliſh to female education, (which is the more to be wondered at, when we conſider how her mind was neglected at a period when ſhe moſt ſtood in need of a preceptor) amongſt thoſe, her taſte for elegance of dreſs, makes her often conſulted by many ladies of the firſt faſhion; nor do we mean to compliment in ſaying, if they likewiſe copied ſome parts of her behaviour, it would be no diminution to their ſenſe or dignity.

Thus far relates to her public character. As to her preſent private life, it is ſo ſtrictly under the guidance of circumſpection and decorum, that envy, ſtung at the prudent and œconomical elegance of her ſituation, makes daily, but fruitleſs efforts, to deſcry ſome reproachable part in her conduct. Her filial duty towards, and comfortably ſupporting of, an aged father, accompanied with a chearful benevolence to worthy objects in diſtreſs, are virtues which do honour to the moſt exalted character. She is likewiſe deſervedly eſteemed for a ſcrupulous exactneſs in her dealings, and for being capable of the moſt diſintereſted friendſhip, when raiſed on the baſis of *merit*.

Miſs

Miſs YOUNGE.

THE arts and ſciences may be generally compared to coy miſtreſſes; they muſt be often *congéed* to, ſolicited, and dangled after, before they grant the laſt indulgence. There are, however, exceptions in both caſes; when the genius of the profeſſor, and the *je ne ſçai quoi* of the lover, bear down the ſtages of progreſſion, and in the firſt attack prevail over the united efforts of application, time, and attention.

If we peculiarize this obſervation to the ſtage, we find but very few performers ſtarting out at once into the meridian of applauſe. On the contrary, ſome of our moſt celebrated amongſt the antient and modern players, were obliged to time and obſervation for the cultivation of their talents; and, indeed, when we conſider the many mechanical requiſites that are neceſſary to aſſiſt genius in this profeſſion, why it ſhould be otherwiſe is an object of admiration? Some exceptions, however, have prevailed over this general rule;—Mr. Garrick, and the late Mr. Powell, "bore their bluſhing honours thick about them," on their firſt appearance; Miſs Younge adds another exception.

Deſcended from a good family, who left her little beſide her education, the heroine of this page had her ſituation in life to make at a period

period when moſt girls are occupied by no other ideas than their pleaſure. Before ſhe had time to determine on any thing, a dignified profeſſor of the long robe paid his *devoirs* to her. This gentleman being early bred an apothecary, and afterwards purſuing law, (with whoſe *quibbles* he ſoon became very converſant) it is not to be expected he ſhould be a connoiſſeur in the myſteries of Cupid. Plutus, however, was his friend, who prevailed ſo feelingly with the young lady, that, on certain conditions, ſhe condeſcended to bleſs his arms. For ſome time, from the force of gratitude on her ſide, and novelty on his, this amour was ſupported with a tolerable grace; but ſhort is the date of that connexion where the hearts do not unite! The natural moroſeneſs of his temper breaking out, removed the artificial affection ſhe was induced to ſhew him; and deſpiſing a ſettlement ſo incompatible with happineſs, ſhe readily diſſolved a connexion, to which her hand, not her heart, had conſented.

Her experience with this *coif'd* quibbler, taught her the folly of combating her inclinations and ſhe now determined to be the carver of her own happineſs. She had, in the the courſe of her education, acquainted herſelf with the beſt Engliſh dramatic writers. It was a ſtyle of reading ſhe always reliſhed ſo much, that ſhe now began ſeemingly to think of putting it in practice, and procuring a letter of recommendation to Mr. Garrick, this gentleman was ſo pleaſed with her firſt eſſay, that he took the pains of attending her at ſeveral private

rehearſals

rehearſals, when every trial gave freſh proof of her abilities.

At the end of three months, (in the winter of 1768) ſhe came out in Imogen, in Cymbeline; a part however hazardous from the variety of its difficulties, yet ſo ſtrongly was ſhe poſſeſſed of the ſpirit of the author, and ſo powerfully aſſiſted by her addreſs, and other ſtage accompliſhments, that ſhe acquired univerſal applauſe. Her next attempt was in Zingis, a new tragedy, brought out that winter by Mr. Dow; in this, though an inferior character, ſhe renewed her applauſe with the public; convinced them her acting was not the mere force of document, but of judgment and feeling; and, in ſhort, was ſecond to none but Mrs. Barry, who in this, as well as in every other character, ſtrikes criticiſm dumb.

From theſe proofs, Miſs Younge's theatrical merit was pretty well eſtabliſhed, and ſhe now ſhared moſt of the capital parts in tragedy and comedy; all of which ſhe acquitted herſelf of with a judgment and ſpirit rarely the lot of an actreſs of her ſtanding. She was in this line of reputation, when the managers of Smock-alley theatre in Dublin commiſſioned Mr. Macklin, who was then here as their recruiting officer for that ſide of the water. This judicious veteran inſtantly laid hold of her, and accordingly made her advantageous propoſals. Tho' ſhe ſaw them entirely in this light, ſhe had generoſity enough to give a preference to her own manager, whoſe uſual clear-ſightedneſs was ſo much aſleep on this occaſion as to let her go, for the difference of thirty ſhillings per week

week advance, at a time when Mrs. Barry ſcarcely had a ſupport in tragedy.

Miſs Younge having thus diſcharged every duty to her delicacy, arrived in Dublin the beginning of laſt winter, and inſtantly made a formidable head againſt the manager of Crow-ſtreet theatre. The people of that capital (who by the bye are one of the moſt judicious audiences in Europe) ſaw her merit, and rewarded it. Here ſhe was encouraged to fathom the line of her abilities; and trying the ſeveral rounds of comedy and tragedy, was enabled from experience to weigh the force of her powers. Her engagement in Ireland being but for a ſeaſon, Roſcius, in the mean time, awoke from his dream of error, and making a virtue of neceſſity, has *generouſly* called her over to *do juſtice to her abilities.*

Though the little time this lady has been on the ſtage (being in all about three years) ſhould preclude her as an object of criticiſm, yet her talents have been ſo very conſpicuous already, as juſtly lead her to that enquiry. Her perſon is happily ſuited to the dignity of tragedy, being perfectly well made; and though not an abſolute beauty, her face and addreſs are both agreeable. Though her voice is not exactly tuneable, it is far from being diſcordant, particularly in tragedy, where her conduct of it takes off all its harſhneſs. This lady is likewiſe much indebted to nature for a pliancy of features, that mark the paſſions ſhe would preſent with great expreſſion. She ſhould guard, however, againſt the exceſs of this requiſite, as by too frequent a repetition it loſes its force, and conſequently its utility.

Miſs

Miſs HAYWARD.

FEMALE errors are generally the inſeparable harbingers of misfortune. Purſuits of this kind not only unhinge them from the affection of their friends, but introduce them to a ſcene of life ſo variouſly beſet with alluring pleaſures and diſſipations, that it requires little of the art of prognoſtication to pronounce loſs of character to be followed with loſs of every thing elſe. Every general rule, however, has its exceptions; and the heroine of this page (however ſhe might have been a greater ornament to morality) had, in all probability, never ſhared half the notice of the public, had ſhe trudged on in the humble line of her vocation.

To abridge the hiſtory of her origin, we ſhould ſay of her as Jeremy ſays in the play, "She came up ſtairs into the world;" and being deſigned to tread the ſame track of her parents, ſhe had her education on the ſame line. Her knowledge, therefore, was confined to mere obſervations on human nature, which ſhe read with an attention that has ſince ſhewn her far from a noviciate in that ſcience. Clara's good ſtars prevailed over the circumſtances of her birth. The blooming charms of this *ſubterraneous* beauty accidentally attracted the attention of an officer in the guards,—he ſighed—and conquered.

Her

Her amoroſo, probably, on the firſt forming of this connexion, had little more in view than a temporary gratification; but the charms of her perſon received ſupports from the charms of her mind. Her converſation every day, more and more, proclaiming the ſtrength of her underſtanding, determined him to cultivate it with aſſiduity. He had her accordingly inſtructed in reading, writing, and a few uſual accompliſhments; all of which ſhe received with a docility that made it to be lamented ſhe was not more early in life initiated into thoſe neceſſary articles of female education.

She was repaying him his attention by a rapid progreſs in her ſtudies, when the ſituation of his affairs demanded a ſeparation. It may well be inferred how painful this was to both pupil and preceptor. She fled to her books as an aſylum, which ſhe occaſionally relieved with a lover. The former, however, claimed her principal attention, and in a little time ſhe could read ſome of our beſt authors with an unuſual degree of preciſion.—Of all the ſpecies of reading, ſhe was moſt delighted with tragedy. The ſentiments contained in moſt of our modern productions of this ſort aſſimilated to her own, and ſhe began to adopt ſtrong ſenſations for putting her theory in practice, and becoming an heroine herſelf. She communicated her ſentiments to one of her lovers, who was an intimate of Mr. Foote, who immediately propoſed her to that manager. Here ſhe had a trial; and Mr. Sheridan being in the company at the ſame time, he became ſo prepoſſeſſed in her favour, on the firſt diſplay of her infant abilities,

abilities, that he voluntarily became her inſtructor in the hiſtrionic myſteries.

All her thoughts being now turned on the ſtage, ſhe laboured with unremitting diligence to make herſelf miſtreſs of it. Her preceptor gave every aſſiſtance to her abilities, and after a few weeks practice, ſhe made her firſt appearance, the latter end of the ſummer 1770, in Caliſta, in the *Fair Penitent*, which, on that account, run for ſeveral nights to crowded audiences, who beſtowed every encouragement to her riſing merit.

The eſtabliſhment of her theatrical reputation drew freſh groupes of admirers. The favours of a pretty woman are doubled when ſhe appears on the ſtage to any advantage, and Clara had now this ſtand to make her conqueſt from. Many *pig-tailed puppies of quality* dangled in her train;—but in vain, their ſolicitations were ſeverally rejected. She had it now in her power to make her choice, and ſhe was determined that choice ſhould be totally to her mind. After looking round her, therefore, for ſome time, ſhe accepted the heart of a *young gentleman in the guards*, as remarkable for the *oddity* of his taſte in dreſs, as the delicacy of his perſon; which laſt is ſo remarkable that he has often gone into *keeping* himſelf, when his *finances* have run ſhort. Such is her preſent connexion.

The beginning of laſt winter, the acting manager of Drury-lane, ever attentive to ſecure thoſe plants that have a proſpect of bearing much fruit, made her propoſals of ſo advantageous a nature, ſhe could not reject them. Since this

his time ſhe has appeared but in few charac-ers, to give her the greater opportunities of tudy and obſervation. Theſe efficient aids it s her intereſt cloſely to purſue, as on theſe epend her future reputation.

A critique on her merit as an actreſs would e at preſent unfair, as ſhe is not long enough et in theatrical mould for her abilities ſufficiently to maturate. Thus much, however, may e inferred, that from the ſpecimens ſhe has lready given, the natural elegance of her perſon, and the power of her expreſſion, ſhe wants othing but time and attention to give her a very conſiderable rank in the theatre.

Mrs. BADDELEY.

AS if the father's occupation was a ſymbol of the daughter's future fame, we find this heroine to be the offspring of the late ſtate-trumpet to his Majeſty; a man who, without *puffing*, may be ſaid to preſerve his incorruptibility amidſt all the blandiſhments of a court; and maugre the force of example, never *ſounded* the voice of flattery in the ears of his ſuperiors.

The dawning beauty, and amiable manners of his daughter, made him ambitious of giving her all thoſe genteel accompliſhments, which, whilſt they fill up that part of a woman's education that qualify her for public aſſemblies, often leave the mind a void for domeſtic duties.

ties. Having a good natural voice, ſhe ſoo improved it by a knowledge of muſic; and be ing equally a devotee to the muſes, the thea tre became her principal entertainment: hence warbling notes, and heroes proteſtations form the whole of her converſation, which with the aſſiſtance of a face, approximating divinity, wherever ſhe went, ſhe might ſay with Cæſar —*Vidi, et vici.*

During her intercourſe with the ſtage, ſhe got acquainted with Mr. Baddeley, belonging to Drury-lane theatre; and as this gentleman's memoirs are ſo cloſely connected with her's, the public, we hope, will think it no digreſſion to preface his introduction by a few hiſtorical notes.

This ſon of Theſpis had been originally a cook, and in this capacity ſerved ſeveral noble men and gentlemen. Amongſt the reſt, our Engliſh Ariſtophanes, which gave birth to the well known *bon mot* of his, upon ſome diſpute he had with Mr. Baddeley, when afterwards on his ſtage—"damn the raſcal, I deſerve the "treatment, for taking the ſpit from his hands, "to put it by his ſide." After he had quitted his culinary profeſſion, he entered himſelf as valet de chambre to a gentleman going the tour of Europe: here he acquired a ſmattering of the French, and a few continental *bagatelles*, which, on his return to town, qualified him, round the *garden*, as a man of taſte; and on the ſtage as a man that might be uſeful.

At this period we find him captivated with the charms of our heroine; and, *as he had ſerved abroad*, he preſumed on his qualifications, to

make honourable propoſals:—he was not diſappointed. Poſſeſſing all thoſe *agrémens* that recommend a man to the youthful part of the fair ſex, they gained upon her yet unpractiſed heart; and after a ſhort courtſhip they were married. Finding himſelf in the poſſeſſion of ſuch a treaſure, he hinted to her the ſtage, a profeſſion ſhe had ever a *penchant* for, but under the protection of her huſband rendered doubly pleaſing. He accordingly introduced her to the managers of Drury-lane, who inſtantly agreed with her at a decent ſalary. Mrs. Baddeley no ſooner appeared under theatrical advantages, than ſhe became a favourite of the town. One admired her perſon, another her voice, and a third her acting. In ſhort, the whole audience conſented in giving her the moſt flattering encomiums her moſt ſanguine wiſhes could form, which no doubt emboldened her to diſcloſe thoſe excellencies that diffidence, in conſequence of a contrary reception, might with-hold. The happy huſband collected theſe opinions with pleaſure.

He had been married now above a twelvemonth, and raptures had pretty well ſubſided; he therefore *prudently* judged there were other avenues to his fortune, than ſimply his wife's theatrical merit; and in conſequence of this opinion decided, in his own mind, not to let ſlip the firſt favourable opportunity of taking up his quarters in that *row*, where even nobility have ſometimes condeſcended to inhabit.

Whilſt things were in this ſituation, an eminent Jew merchant in the city—who has ſince added to the liſt of bankrupts—perceiving the

husband's good nature, and struck with th wife's charms, offered himself as an humbl suitor. Not formed (as Shakespeare says) *make women false* from his address or con versation, he relied on the power of his for tune. To the lady therefore he made presen and to the complying *Cornuto*, he lent th sum of 300l. interest free. From a repetitio of such bombardments, the fair citadel surre dered, and the amorous Israelite found himsel in the possession of all that was valuable.

'Tis an observation made by persons wh are very conversant in the female sex, th when women have once made a slip, from th temptation of money, they generally make a other from the temptation of personal likin Mrs. Baddeley was a philosopher of this sect for considering her husband in no other lig than of a *convenient*, she thought herself liberty to transfer her affections on the fi person she thought most deserving. An o portunity soon presented itself. She had lo observed the looks and assiduities of one of t principal performers of the theatre, (the l Mr. Holland) and under a pretence of bei privately instructed by him, at his lodgin in her profession, she never failed calling him three or four times a week. These consta visits brought on a *reciprocity* of sentiment, a at last terminated in a total exchange of hear The complying husband not only acquiesced this, but constantly attended her to and fr the comedian's lodgings; for though it was in the latter's power to do as much for h as the wealthy Israelite, the rank he held

e theatre, ſome occaſional preſents, and the
n of his table, were no inconſiderable *douceurs*
a man who preferred *benefits* to *delicacy*, and
ghed at the punctilios of *honour* when they
fled with his *intereſt*; indeed the lady her-
f was ſo charmed with her ſituation, that
e thought all appearances unneceſſary; as
pears by an altercation ſhe had, about this
e, with a favourite daughter of Thalia (Mrs.
ington); for being worſted in the engage-
nt, ſhe flung herſelf out of the green room,
d burſting into tears exclaimed, "If my dear
arles had been preſent, you would not dare
uſe me thus."

But ſuch is the inconſtancy of all ſublunary
ations, that a dreadful ſmall pox carried off,
a few days, the object of her affections.
the firſt news of his death, ſhe fell into
extremeſt agonies of grief, and precluded
ſelf from all ſociety; ſhe had formed a notion
not only quitting the ſtage, but retiring to
convent for life. Her part in the *Jubilee*,
ch at that time was in its meridian run,
obliged to be given to another; and the
urite ſong of *Sweet Willy O!* ceaſed, from
abſence from the theatre, to have its uſual
ption. In ſhort, the votaries of Venus
under the ſtrongeſt apprehenſions of for
loſing one of its faireſt *devotees*; the ſtage,
of its greateſt ornaments;—but virtue,
it originates from temporary paſſions,
laſts long.—The great exceſs of her
the more ſpeedily effected her cure; and
out a month's time ſhe became ſo perfect
iloſopher, that ſhe eaſily reconciled mortality

to our preſent ſtate, and returned to *bleſs* more her huſband, and firſt lover. What comfort this might have been to the for the latter began to perceive, from her late tachment, he was not the firſt in her affec and therefore prudently withdrew from a nexion, *where* nothing was to be ſhared him but his purſe.

This diſſolution was no ſooner announc than the gallant world were ſtriving ſhould be foremoſt in paying her their *devo* but the death of her dear Charles had ſo obliterated *real* affection from her mind, ſhe deſigned in future, to have an eye onl intereſt. Many ſuitors on this principle ceeded;—amongſt the reſt, a noble Lord; amours of whoſe lady with a great perſo have enriched the Atalantis of the year 1

In the midſt of this *promiſcuous* purſuit, was ſingled out by the eldeſt ſon of an nobleman Lord C—.) He inſtantly mad propoſal of his carriage, his houſe, and purſe, which were as readily accepted. ſhe did honour to her lover's choice, by k ing up a conſtant table, and ſeeing a digious deal of *genteel* company; her car every day attended her to rehearſal, and at n frequently brought home ſome of the perform Mr. H— was a man of expence, and an mirer of the theatre, conſequently gave all thoſe little extravagancies; what pleaſed pleaſed him, and without the mind on ei ſide being very materially attached, they ſp their time with great good-humour and plea try.

Mat

Matters were at this ſtand when the brother her lover arrived from Ireland on a viſit. had no ſooner been introduced to Mrs. ddeley than Cupid ſent him his keeneſt dart; a while he attempted to diſengage it, but more he tampered with it the more it kled, till he found himſelf at laſt under the nful neceſſity of ſacrificing his life to his de- cy, or declaring his ſituation to his brother. er many conflicts, he however choſe the lat- , and urging in the moſt preſſing and frater- terms, that as ſhe was not ſo much the ect of *his mind* as of his *paſſions*, that he uld transfer her to a brother, whoſe life de- nded on that circumſtance, and whoſe *mind* ne was intereſted in the requeſt.

Mr. H—— finding this a ſerious piece of buſi- ſs, conſulted with the lady, and pleaded in moſt perſuaſive manner, adding at the ſame ne, he would make up thoſe deficiencies that brother's fortune could not ſo well ſupply. heſe arguments at laſt prevailed. She found rſelf under the neceſſity of contributing to cure of a diſorder ſhe had herſelf created, nd *goodnaturedly* conſented (as it would not going out of the *family*) to remove her lodg- g to his.

The unexpected ſight of this female Æſcula- ius had the deſired effect. The patient in- antly recovered from his diſorder, and they ave ſince continued to live as happily as un- ounded affection on his ſide, and polite com- laiſance on her's can poſſibly admit.

In her profeſſion Mrs. Baddeley has very ju pretenſions to the *agreeable* and *uſeful*. As *ſinger* ſhe is clear, melodious, and expreſſive and as an *actreſs* the public may judge of he merit, when we impartially declare we ha often ſeen her plead the cauſe of *virtue* wit ſuch evident ſymptoms of conviction, as le us, for the moment, to imagine it *natural*.

Miſs POPE.

THERE is, perhaps, no profeſſion tha requires ſo many minute qualifications, as that of the ſtage. It is ſufficient merely to *know* others, but to a poſſeſſion of the drama muſt be added grace, feeling, manner, and a number of ſuch *etceteras*. That the actor, who *only* diſcovers the traces of the poet in his mind, though he may not actually *offend*, can never be ſaid to *excel*. Notwithſtanding the road to theatrical fame is thus narrowed, what crowds do we annually ſee preſſing forward, who, if we examine their pretenſions, found their claims on little better grounds than *inclination*? Hence we ſee ſo many *firſt*-night heroes and heroines "fret their hour upon the ſtage, and be no more;" or at moſt ſink into *well-dreſſed Lords*, or *trailing attendants*.

Could the ſingular merit of a few reſcue the the ſtage from this general cenſure, no one has a ſtronger claim to that merit than the amiable

ſubject

ubject before us. . . . . Born with every alent for the ſock, and gifted with every requiſite to adorn it, ſhe reigns a particular favourite of Thalia; ſo that the queſtion has long ince lain with the critics, not *where ſhe is deficient?* but *where does ſhe moſt excel?* With the advantages of being viſited by the Muſes, ſhe had the additional one of being early ſituated in their neighbourhood, as her father, Mr. Pope, has long lived in reputable buſineſs near Drury-lane playhouſe; and though our critics may be offended at our aſſigning the reſidence of thoſe *chaſte* goddeſſes in Ruſſel-ſtreet, we flatter ourſelves they will agree with us in thinking, they have often taken up an occaſional reſidence in a Barry, an Abington, and a Pope.

Young minds, when detained by pleaſure on any ſubject, liſten with attention to every thing that magnifies it. Miſs Pope, from the early knowledge ſhe muſt have had of theatrical affairs, by her ſituation, probably ripened thoſe talents ſhe is in poſſeſſion of, much ſooner than otherwiſe. We are led to this opinion, from ſome early preſages ſhe gave of her natural turn for humour, which exerted ſo ſtrongly upon every little occaſion, that long before her entering on the ſtage, ſhe was conſidered as the *droll* of her acquaintance. Aſſuming the comic complexion ſtill ſtronger as ſhe grew up, induced ſome of her friends to think the ſtage the beſt nurſery for ſuch talents. Her parents, after ſome time, conſented, and ſhe ſoon after made her firſt appearance (if we miſtake not) in Mr. Colman's *petit piece* of *Polly Honeycombe*.

Her reception in this part, though not a very favourable one for a player, however, diſcovered her *forte* in comedy; and the public did not heſitate in pronouncing her a riſing actreſs, who would one day diſcloſe the full powers of the *vis comica*. Tho' nature, aſſiſted with the attention ſhe beſtowed on her profeſſion, would have, no doubt, in time, obtained her a conſiderable rank in the theatre, what principally matured her talents, was to have found ſo excellent a model before her as Mrs. Clive; being profeſſedly in this actreſs's walk, ſhe had the advantage of copying her inimitable manner and humour; and though the aſcent was great, emulation was ſtill greater, which, joined to ſome other ſubſequent circumſtances, all conſpired to pronounce ſtrongly in her favour.

Mrs. Clive being on the retiring plan almoſt on Miſs Pope's commencement, gave her an opportunity to be let occaſionally into ſome of the former's principal parts; ſuch as Phillis in the *Conſcious Lovers*, Beatrice in *Much Ado about Nothing*, &c. each of which ſhe was received in with particular compliment. But what called out the full extent of her powers, was the character of Nell, in Coffey's ballad farce of *The Devil to Pay*; a circumſtance the more remarkable, as it was in this very part, thirty years before, that Mrs. Clive gained the ſummit of her reputation. Though this at firſt looked againſt her, yet it turned out a point in her favour. Thoſe who had ſeen Mrs. Clive in the character, or remembered her firſt appearance in it, were pleaſed with the thoughts of ſo able a ſucceſſor. Thoſe to whom the character was original, were captivated with the charms of novelty.

The

The *run* ſhe gave this little piece, in which ſhe was greatly aſſiſted by Mr. Love's Jobſon, ſtamped her reputation both with the managers and the public; the former of whom conſidering her as a *principal* in her *walk*, not only increaſed her ſalary on a line with the firſt performers, but gave her a free choice of parts, which ſhe has ſince ſo judiciouſly choſen and executed, with reputation to herſelf, and entertainment to the public.

The life of a player that is not marked with *peregrination*, *vice*, or *diſtreſs*, abounds very little with thoſe kind of incidents and adventures that pleaſe the million. Miſs Pope's theatrical fame has been all ſought for and obtained in London; and as her parents circumſtances, with her own œconomy, have reſcued her from the neceſſity of changing about, from place to place, the public muſt be content with viewing her (in this inſtance) undiſtinguiſhed from the reſt of her ſex. Perhaps thoſe that have formed long and intimate acquaintances with her, may be able to make ſome nice diſtinctions, which may ſeparate it from others; but even theſe would be too minute to commit to paper, ſo as to aſſume the habit of Hiſtory.

We are obliged then to dwell upon thoſe lines that principally mark the portrait. As an actreſs, therefore, we think her a firſt-rate acquiſition to the ſtage, particularly in the walks of *low Comedy*. This undoubtedly is her *chef d'œuvre*. The features of her face, the freedom of her laugh, and above all, what the painters call *manner*, conſpire to give her this ex-

cellence. The critics have of late complained of her figure, and we will agree with them, that her jollity has a good deal ſpoiled her as a picture for an exhibition; but is this remembered in Jobſon's or Petruchio's wife, the pert chambermaid, and the numberleſs other characters ſhe is in poſſeſſion of?

Before ſuch merit all diſtinctions fly,
Pritchard's genteel, and Garrick's ſix feet high.

To the qualities of one of the beſt actreſſes of her time, ſhe joins the ſuperior characters of a *dutiful* daughter and *virtuous* woman; characters eſtimable wherever they are found, but ſhould be doubly cheriſhed and protected blooming in the *rank* ſoil of a theatre, where virtue is but thinly fenced, and worſe cultivated, and where the prominent features of the profeſſion are *folly* and *diſſipation*.

The practice of œconomy, on a good ſalary, has given her an independence, in general, much ſuperior to the ſons and daughters of the ſtage. She conſidered, from her firſt commencement on the theatre, that many prejudices were to be combated,—it was at beſt a life of precarioufneſs. Theſe reflections called up all her attention, and preſcribing to herſelf a line of conduct, in which ſhe has invariably perſevered, it has now enabled her to move in a circle of life, as creditable to herſelf as exemplary to the *green room*.

Mrs.

Mrs. EGERTON.

THE lives of few heroines have, perhaps, been more chequered than this lady. The *variety* ſhe has undergone has been ſo liberal and unbounded, that her biographer runs great riſque of being cenſured, for dealing too largely in "*poetital proſe*," or crowding his piece with too many incidents; he therefore is under the neceſſity of referring a few of his *ſceptical* readers to the corroboration of thoſe who can equally authenticate the particulars.

Mrs. Egerton was born at Gibraltar, a few years previous to the breaking out of the Spaniſh war in the year 1739; and is the daughter on the one ſide, of a Portugueſe Jew ſutler, who aſſumed the name of A—b—e; and on the other, of a native of Briſtol. Some few years after our heroine's birth, Mr. A—— met with a misfortune, not at all unincident to men of his profeſſion in the army, who under the diſguiſe of a ſutler, too often officiate as a ſpy; in ſhort, convicted in this laſt office, he was *ſuſpended*, and left behind him a young handſome widow, with two blooming daughters, unpoſſeſſed of every thing but their beauty and misfortunes. The Engliſh officers, at that time ſtationed at Gibraltar, pitied their diſtreſs, and chearfully went into a general ſubſcription, which

which enabled them to diſcharge ſome little expences contracted there; and left them a ſum not only ſufficient to bring them to England, but to eſtabliſh them in ſome little line of future ſupport.

On their arrival in London, the fair fugitives took a ſmall houſe in Weſtminſter; and as every hour made new promiſes of the daughters beauty, the fond parent was flattered with a notion of their marrying, in ſuch a town as this, to great advantage. Probably, on this idea, ſhe went into ſome little articles of expence, not quite ſo conſiſtent with her finances; for in about a year and a half after her arrival, ſhe had the misfortune to be arreſted for a debt of one hundred pounds. The officer who arreſted her his name was K——; and as the daughters were conſtantly with her during her confinement in the ſpunging houſe, the eldeſt, Miſs A——, made ſuch an impreſſion on his heart, that he offered to pay the debt, provided ſhe would prevail on her daughter to give him her hand in marriage. Mr. K—— was young, with a tolerable perſon; and to the vocation of a bailiff, he connected the trade of an engraver. So that from theſe advantages, with the ſentiments of generoſity he expreſſed for a ſuffering parent, he met with little reluctance on the ſide of the young lady.

On the celebration of the marriage, the mother and the other daughter were taken into Mr. K——'s houſe, where they lived for ſome time in perfect harmony; but whether their expences out-run their income, or whether they were induced, from the novelty of the attempt, they

ſold

ſold off their their furniture, and went for Ireland in queſt of theatrical promotion. The perſons of the two daughters probably firſt ſuggeſted this idea, particularly Mrs. K—, who, to a pleaſing face, added an elegant figure, with a pleaſantry of converſation perfectly agreeable. Here the two daughters got readily engaged, at genteel ſalaries, at the theatre-royal in Crow-ſtreet.

A woman poſſeſſed of a fine face and good figure, doubles her admirers by being on the ſtage; for which reaſon the French ladies, thus qualified, often commence actreſſes without any theatrical qualifications, and often without ſalaries, as it is an eminence from whence they can be more diſtinguiſhed by the gallant world. Mrs. K— felt the good effects of this reſolution, for ſhe had not been long on Crow-ſtreet theatre, when ſhe found herſelf diſtinguiſhed by an Iriſh baronet of good fortune, (Sir H—y E—h—n) who convinced the huſband of the ſtrength of his paſſion ſo ſtrongly, by the ſtrength of his purſe, that little more was neceſſary than common forms to make himſelf ſole poſſeſſor of the object of his deſires.

Inconſtancy was one of thoſe ſhades that marked the Baronet's character;—doatingly paſſionate in the beginning, he generally reverſed to indifference, from this he ſometimes declined to contempt. He was arrived at the ſecond ſtage, when, in conſequence of ſome ſpirited remonſtrances on her ſide, they mutually broke off; but being determined not to go out of the family, he laid cloſe ſiege to the younger ſiſter, and in leſs than a month carried the town.

The

The tranſaction of publicly living with two ſiſters, and that too in ſuch an immediate ſucceſſion, juſtly gave occaſion to report to reprobate their characters; but the mother being informed of the charge, took upon her to wipe off all aſperſions, by declaring they were not ſiſters; for that Miſs A—— was no more than an adopted child, to whom they had *charitably* beſtowed the name. If the affair had reſted here, it could have been conſtrued but a common act of gallantry; but unfortunately for the parties, Sir Harry's inconſtancy began to break out afreſh, and as if determined to put virtue entirely out of countenance, where ſhould it light on but the *charitable* mother herſelf, who having ſtruck the knight in the hour of variety, he transferred all his affections for the daughters to the mother; and has often ſince been heard to ſay, "could any one woman fix his inclinations, it muſt be Mrs. A——."

Mrs. K——, from the time of quitting the Baronet fell into a reſerve of conduct. Her pride was not only piqued by the loſs of his affections, but mortified at the object. Hence ſhe became diſtant, reſerved, and retired, and barely did the duties of her profeſſion, without ever mixing with the theatre. An Iriſh commoner (M—— *****, Eſq;) remarkable for the *delicacy* of his amours, beheld this change with rapture. He had long liked her perſon, but was afraid of her levity. Her preſent conduct, however, diſperſed all his doubts, and he did not heſitate to become her admirer. With him ſhe might have lived

in

n eaſe and affluence, but her natural gaiety iſcloſing itſelf under the ſunſhine of proſpeity, gavé him pain. He was one of thoſe who could not make the proper allowances for nnocent chearfulneſs; nor ſhe one that had rt enough to accommodate herſelf to his emper. This ſoon brought on a mutual coolneſs, and from thence a final ſeparation.

This happened about the middle of winter, and being determined not to enter into ny connexion immediately, ſhe gave a looſe o that variety, ſo congenial to her ſentiments, till the play-houſe cloſed; when the mother and ſiſter being both *diſengaged*, as well as herſelf, they agreed to ſummer it with the Dublin company, who were then ſetting out for Drogheda, a town within twenty miles of the capital. On their arrival, two ſuch ſprightly *nouvelle* beauties could not fail to attract general notice. The ſucceſsful two, however, amongſt a crowd of country beaux, were Major B—h and Colonel B—e, who happened to be quartered, at that time, in the neighbourhood. Mrs. K—— fell to the Major's lot, Miſs A—— to the Colonel's; and as the mother was the only perſon unprovided for, the two gentlemen agreed to take a large houſe between them, and appoint her the *gouvernante*.

This arrangement, though planned on the principles of affection and œconomy, was near being productive of much miſchief; for they had not been long together, when a diſpute aroſe between the two ladies about precedency at table.

table. Mrs. K—— claimed it as her indubitable right, as being eldeſt ſiſter; whereas Miſs A—— founded her right on the ſuperiority of being the Colonel's lady. Indeed, there is no ſaying where the diſpute would terminate, did not the mother, with her uſual *good nature* interpoſe, by filling herſelf the *honourable* department in the debate.

Their return to Dublin, on the commencement of the enſuing winter, diſſolved this *tripartite* connexion. Mrs. K——, therefore, found herſelf once more her own miſtreſs, of which ſhe never failed to avail herſelf, by entering into all thoſe pleaſures that were within her graſp. In the midſt of this career, ſhe contracted an intimacy with one Madame B——, a French lady of uncommon wit and ſprightlineſs, who taking a *particular penchant* for our heroine, offered to frank her to, and from the continent. The deſire of rambling, but above all the love of *dear variety* prevailed, and the two *female lovers* ſet out for Paris. Here ſhe continued for above a year; but how ſhe employed her time there, whether in the *promiſcuous* purſuit of pleaſure, or in a *particular* attachment to her patroneſs, hiſtory is ſilent. She arrived in London about the beginning of laſt winter, and taking upon her the *romantic* name of Egerton, got an eſtabliſhment at Drury-lane theatre, where ſhe made her firſt appearance in the character of Lady Townly; a part, however difficult for her to execute on the whole, yet gave her an opportunity of ſhewing ſuch excellencies

in

n ſeveral parts of it, as ſtamp her an agree-
able and uſeful actreſs.

Mrs. W. BARRY.

AMONGST the liberal vocatio[illegible]here is not one where the the profe[illegible] (particularly the female ones) are m[illegible] ſubject to the general charge of *dubiety o[illegible]aracter*, than the ſtage. Whether this ari[illegible] from a courſe of irregularities that too of[illegible] precede a commencement on the theatre, the force of ſolicitation when on it, or the impreſſions left on their minds by the frequent perſonification of *looſe* characters, is hard to determine; probably they may all aſſiſt, as we find the charge, with very few exceptions, not over malevolently founded.

Having ſaid thus much on the perilous ſituation of the ſtage, it would be unfair for biography to be ſilent on the merits of thoſe *diſtinguiſhed few* who have riſen *ſingular* to cenſure, and who have, in their own conduct, ſo far diverted the force of general ſtigma.—Forward, very forward, in this liſt, is the heroine of theſe memoirs, who, from above a dozen years acquaintance with the theatre, *ſingle* and *married*, has, in each of theſe departments, not only preſerved an irreproach-

able

able character, but has never been blown on by the raſh, intemperate breath of ſcandal.

This lady is the daughter of Mr. W. Oſborne, formerly butler to the honourable ſociety of the Inner Temple; who, from his ſituation in life, had it in his power to give his family a very good eſtabliſhment, did his inclinations lead him that way;—unfortunately for them they did not;—continual attachments to pleaſure, particularly to gallantry, rendered the life of Mrs. Oſborne ſo uneaſy, and opened ſuch a proſpect of deſtruction, that after waiting many years for an alteration in her huſband's conduct, ſhe thought it moſt adviſeable, though reluctant, to quit him; and taking this, her only daughter, under her protection, ſhe ſet ſail for Ireland, where ſhe had ſome family connexions.

Mrs. Oſborne was, for ſome time after her arrival in Dublin, undetermined what to do to ſupport herſelf and daughter in any little line of independency: an infinity of ſchemes preſented themſelves, which from the unſettled reſolution of a mind in diſtreſs, or the want of a ſufficiency to execute them, vaniſhed on their approach.

Whilſt their affairs were thus embarraſſed, a gentleman of their particular acquaintance dropt in one evening unnoticed, as Miſs Oſborne was reading to her mother the tragedy of *Venice Preſerved*. On the approach of their friend ſhe threw by the book; but the gentleman being well pleaſed with the little he ſurpriſed her reading, inſiſted on her proceeding, which

ſhe

ſhe did, with ſuch judgment, preciſion, and pathos, as firſt ſuggeſted to him the idea of her going on the ſtage. As ſoon, therefore, as ſhe had finiſhed the play, he communicated his opinion to the two ladies, the youngeſt of whom explained by her bluſhes no diſinclination; but the mother would not hearken to it, on account of the general odium its profeſſors lay under. However, on the affair being further urged by other friends, and as ſhe would have ſtill the care of her daughter, ſhe at laſt conſented to let her undergo a theatrical probation.

The gentleman who intereſted himſelf ſo warmly in this affair, was likewiſe an intimate acquaintance of Spranger Barry, Eſq; at that time joint manager with Mr. Woodward, of Crow-ſtreet theatre. At his inſtance, Mr. Barry, a few days afterwards, called at Mrs. Oſborne's, and heard Miſs go through the ſeveral parts of Belvidera, Alicia, and Almeria, which ſhe did ſo much above his moſt ſanguine expectations, that, without further trial, he offered to engage her for four years certain, at a very conſiderable ſalary. Here maternal fears again took place, and the bugbears of the ſtage recurred with double force on the mother's imagination. But theſe offers being backed by all her friends, the precarioufneſs of her preſent ſituation determined her to accede to the propoſals; and Miſs Oſborne ſoon after made her firſt appearance in the character of the *Mourning Bride*.

There

There is an art *almoſt* eſſentially neceſſary to combine with the profeſſion of an actreſs, to give her a firſt rate *eclat* in the theatrical world; and that is, a diſpoſition to grant favours, or at leaſt to behave with that *unreſervedneſs*, as encourage men to expect them. This is even more neceſſary in Ireland than here, where players in general are not in equal eſtimation, and where one of the leading characteriſtics of that nation is gallantry. The abſolute contempt with which Miſs Oſborne ever treated this art, probably precluded her that general admiration, on her firſt appearance, as was expected. Early educated in the ſtricteſt principles of virtue, ſhe beheld the moſt diſtant advances to vice with horror; and perceiving herſelf now in a ſituation that required double circumſpection, ſhe adhered to every female nicety of decorum, to a degree of ſeverity: ſo that the compliments ſhe received as an actreſs, were merely owing to her excellencies in her profeſſion, which if ſhe did not *capitally* adorn, ſhe at leaſt enriched.

However, her attention to the ſtage, her happy conception of her author, and above all, her irreproachable conduct, procured her the eſteem and protection of the *feeling* and *judicious*; amongſt whom was the late Lord Chancellor Bowes, and other perſonages of the firſt rank and diſtinction in Ireland, who not only gave her every encouragement her public and private character deſerved, but wrote letters of ſtrong recommendation to the principal people of thoſe towns ſhe viſited during the ſummer months of her theatrical peregrination.

Some

Some years after her appearance on the ſtage, ſhe had the misfortune to loſe her mother, when finding herſelf alone in the world ſhe judged it an improper ſituation to remain ſo, for one of her profeſſion; ſhe therefore accepted the hand of Mr. W. Barry, (at that time treaſurer to his brother, Spranger Barry, Eſq;) a gentleman of extreme good character, and amiable diſpoſition, with whom ſhe enjoys that domeſtic kind of comfort, which characterizes conjugal happineſs in any ſituation of life.

As an actreſs, it is really ſurpriſing, poſſeſſed of ſo much merit as ſhe is, ſhe ſhould be (to uſe a theatrical expreſſion) ſo much *thrown upon the ſhelf*, as ſhe has ſince her eſtabliſhment at Drury-lane. I will not pretend to ſay ſhe is capable of filling the firſt walks of her profeſſion on a line with Mrs. Barry or Mrs. Yates; but as a ſecondary actreſs (particularly in tragedy) for *preciſion*, *judgment*, and *ſenſibility*, I would aſk, where is her equal? How then are we to account for her being ſo ſeldom called out to public notice? Does it lie with the *partiality* of the managers? Or are *obſcurity* and *neglect* for ever to be the rewards of virtue?

Mrs.

Mrs JEFFERIES.

PICTURES preſented to public view, are often beſt ſhewn by contraſt; like light and ſhade they mutually aſſiſt, and on the whole, favour each other by the deſign of their diſpoſition. We are therefore, in imitation of this manner, about to give, in the following portrait, one very different from our laſt. The former was rather in *ſtill*, this in *active* life; the one poſſeſſed of *few* deſires, the other of *many*: in ſhort, our laſt may be conſidered as the heroine of a little circle, the preſent as a citizen of the world.

Hiſtory is ſilent when and where this lady was born, nor indeed is it very material. The early part of moſt lives are attended with pretty much the ſame circumſtances; 'tis only when reaſon begins to maturate, and our connexions with the world commence, that biography becomes intereſting. Though the place and time of her birth is thus unſettled, we find her, at a very early age, married to a Mr. Jefferies, the ſon of a reputable linen-draper of that name in the city, who ſet him up in the braziery buſineſs, a little after his marriage, with a good capital and connexions.

Mrs. Jefferies was juſtly reckoned a pretty woman, which added to a certain *gaieté de cœur* ſhe was ever in poſſeſſion of, made her converſation

converſation perfectly agreeable. A good underſtanding was no unneceſſary ingredient to heighten theſe qualifications, and this ſhe likewiſe poſſeſſed: ſo that altogether, on her firſt ſetting out in life, we find her much above the flight of a mechanic. Probably theſe little *agréemens* pained her in her ſituation, which with the croſs accidents trade is conſtantly ſubject to, may have aſſiſted. Whatever was the motive, the ſhop, after ſome time, was relinquiſhed for the ſtage.

Much about this time Mr. Foote was preparing his *Lyar* for the ſtage; and Mrs. Jefferies getting an engagement with this gentleman, made her firſt appearance in the character of Miſs Grantham; a part, tho' not very ſhining, yet requiſite to be filled with eaſe, humour, and good breeding, all of which ſhe was allowed to poſſeſs; and the critics gave her that reception, which earneſted a ſtrong preſumption of her one day being an acquiſition to the ſock.

At the cloſe of this ſeaſon, which was about the year 1762, ſhe found herſelf diſengaged for the winter; with her huſband, therefore, ſhe went into ſome of the country theatres, where they continued for that ſeaſon, ſubject to that adventure and diſtreſs, which particularly mark a peregrinating company. Tired at length with this unſettled ſituation, they enliſted under the banner of Mr. Moſſop, who was then beating up for theatrical recruits. With him they croſſed the Iriſh ſeas, and experienced, for ſome time, a happy reverſe of fortune.

It

It is worthy of obſervation, that in our reſearches thro' the *green-room* of both theatres, we find numbers who began their campaigns in Ireland. From whatever cauſe this happens, the Engliſh ſtage is much indebted to that kingdom, for training up ſome of its beſt performers. Amongſt the *antients*, we may reckon the names of Dogget, Wilkes and Quin; amongſt the *moderns*, Barry, Sheridan, Moſſop, Macklin, Dyer, *&c.*

Her ſprightly, judicious manner of acting, but above all, being what the French call *une bon point*, recommended her ſtrongly to an Iriſh audience, whoſe love of gallantry is ſo very prevailing, that they ſeldom ſeparate a *fine woman* from a *fine actreſs*. But what principally aſſiſted her reputaion behind the ſcenes, was the great favour ſhe ſtood in with the manager;—a point of honour in him who brought her to a ſtrange country, made him doubly aſſiduous to *puſh her forward*, whilſt gratitude on her ſide, made her exert her utmoſt abilities to pleaſe him. The voice of ſcandal, no doubt, was as vociferous as uſual on theſe occaſions. But why ſhould it be liſtened to when Mr. Jefferies, the protector of her honour, held the connexion in no other light than a platonic reciprocity of affection?

The decline of Mr. Moſſop's affairs, which was brought on by the powerful oppoſition of Barry and Woodward, made the generality of the performers under him revolt. Their weekly ſalaries became firſt to be curtailed, which brought on large arrears, and afterwards an almoſt total bankruptcy, ſo that his corps hourly went

went over to the enemy; nor indeed, in such circumstances, could they be blamed; for as Jeremy in the play says, "they may *starve* with him, but to *live* with him, they could no more expect, than be canonized for saints after their decease."

In this general scene of tergiversation, our heroine found herself much embarrassed. On the one side solicited by *honour*, by *affection*, and *gratitude*; on the other by *interest* and *self-preservation*. Did the combat rest on the humbling an ordinary passion, we have no doubt of her obtaining the victory; but as the poet says,

"Our first grand ruling passion is to eat."

This disarmed her attachments, and loosening herself from a situation that must inevitably plunge her in distress, without relieving her patron, she took a kind of adieu of the country, disdaining to act in opposition to a man, to whom she had *acted* so long *under*.

On their arrival in town, Mrs. Jefferies, heartily tired of her ramble, determined to plant herself for life in the warm beds of Drury-lane, a situation, sheltered from the inclemencies of fortune, and where the crop ever returns the fruits of industry. Mr. Jefferies, however, for himself, thought otherwise. The coolness of his reception in Dublin, gave him a distaste for capitals; he therefore directed his pursuits to the country, where he has ever since continued, "dead to the world, and by the world forgot."

There is ſomething very prevailing in the force of old habits. Our heroine, long uſed to that little attention and aſſiduity that characterize a good huſband, found herſelf extremely aukward in his abſence. Hence ſhe was reduced to the neceſſity of ſingling out occaſionally a male friend, on whoſe confidence and converſation ſhe could repoſe, whoſe little ſervices beguile the lonely hour, and made ſome amends for ſo grating an abſence. From theſe conſtant converſations, ſhe has laid up much uſeful knowledge. She has acquired a ſtudy of mankind; not from books, theſe are often flattering pictures, but from *perſonal* knowledge, which ſhews *things* as they really are, ſtripped of the ornaments of the poet and hiſtorian.

Her firſt preceptor in this way was a *lawyer*, who after may years acquaintance, found himſelf under the neceſſity of either abandoning Weſtminſter hall, or the connexion; ſhe had intereſt enough, however, over his heart to make him balance this queſtion for a long time, till the interpoſition of his friends, joined to ſome little *fracas*, which ſhe was ſubject to from the haſtineſs of her temper, decided him in favour of the former.

To him, "another, and another came," till tired with the conſtant ſucceſſion, ſhe at laſt ſettled her affection on a *brawny* ſon of *Mars*, with him all the pleaſures of a *ſingle* life are enjoyed on *her ſide*, while on his (the captain being but on half pay) the intercourſe is found to be far from *unuſeful*.

A

As an actreſs, did ſhe apply wholly to that buſineſs, there is no doubt of her reaching the firſt *forum*; but we are led to think other researches too often break in upon the duties of her profeſſion. As it is, ſhe is pleaſing and agreeable, always clear in the conception of her author, and eaſy in her deportment. Theſe uſeful qualities, attached to an engaging perſon and regular face, enable her to go through her round of parts with decency to herſelf, and ſatisfaction to her audience.

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

HAVING taken leave of the *heroins* of Drury-lane, we are now to exhibit, in the same order, the catalogue of *heroes*; where, forward in the list, like an Atlas amongst mole-hills, stands the inimitable Roscius, one whose eccentric genius has long since carried him to the theatrical empyreum, or whose excellencies are best described in the words of our favourite poet, "Take him all in all, we shall never look upon his like again.

So many histories, anecdotes, and *bon mots*, have been repeatedly told of this gentleman, in the periodical publications of these twenty years past, that it leaves it a difficult task on the present biographers, to collect *untouched* materials: however, as the plan we first set out on, demands so ornamental a character, referring the public to those known circumstances of his life, wherever literally dispersed, we shall content ourselves with some *original* retouches, that may help to set off the picture, or at least to make it somewhat more original.

Mr.

Mr. Garrick is of French extraction, the family name being *Garrique*, which, by an angliciſm very readily accounted for, is expreſſed Garrick at this day. His grandfather was one of thoſe ſpirited Hugonots, who turned his back on his country, when Louis the XIV th revoked the edict of Nantz. This gallant young man, though juſt married, and well ſettled, ſcorned to outlive his liberty; and bringing over his wife and young child, (Mr. Garrick's father, who afterwards died a major) ſettled at Hereford. Thus did the dread of ſlavery, and the love of religion, force him, at an early age, from the united affections of family and country.

Mr. Garrick, the ſubject of theſe memoirs, was born in the year 1717, at Hereford, and was originally intended for the army (the profeſſion of his father) but whether his death prevented the execution of that ſcheme, or other proſpects appeared more beneficial, his purſuits were afterwards directed to the law; and for this purpoſe he completed the rudiments of education he received at Litchfield, under the care of the celebrated Mr. Colſon, ſince mathematical profeſſor at Cambridge; and in the year 1736, entered himſelf a ſtudent of the honourable ſociety of Lincoln's-inn.

It is worthy of obſervation, that this great theatric luminary came firſt up to London in the ſame ſtage with the celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnſon; the one to enter himſelf in the Temple, the other little more than an adventurer under the recommendation of ſome men

of letters. So that both theſe geniuſſes ſtarted into the great world at the ſame time, both alike ſtimulated by ambition, and both had the good fortune to have it amply gratified, in being at the head of their reſpective profeſſions.

Our hero had not been long in his chambers, when he found the trammels of the long robe ſit uneaſy on him. Whether it was the barrenneſs of amuſement that *copyholds* or *perplexed genealogies*, uſually afford, or that a genius like his could not long continue circumſcribed, in any profeſſion but that to which it was ſo peculiarly adapted, is hard to decide. However, we find him, about half a year before he had taken out his certificate (in the year 1741) exchanging the jargon of Coke and Lyttleton, for the fancies of Shakeſpeare, by appearing at Goodman's-fields in the character of Richard the IIId, under the management of Mr. Henry Giffard. To enlarge into a particular detail of this part of his hiſtory, or how he drew after him the polite circles of the Weſt, broke out at once in a meridian blaze of ſplendor, or how he gradually obtained the preſent management, theſe are circumſtances known to the moſt diſtant followers of the ſtage; we will, therefore, decline entering on ſo unentertaining a repetition, by only ſaying, that ſo extraordinary merit muſt make haſty ſtrides. Hence we are not to be ſurpriſed, that ſo early as the year 1747, he, in conjunction with Mr. Lacy, was enabled to purchaſe the property of Drury-lane theatre, with the renovation of that patent.

On

On this occaſion the following prologue, written by Dr. Johnſon, was ſpoken by Mr. Garrick; the excellent compoſition of which juſtly entitles it to a place here.

* * * * *

PROLOGUE on the opening of DRURY-LANE THEATRE, 1747.

WHEN learning's triumph o'er her barbarous foes
First rear'd the ſtage, immortal Shakeſpeare roſe:
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhauſted worlds, and then imagin'd new:
Exiſtence ſaw him ſpurn her bounded reign,
And panting time toil'd after him in vain:
His powerful ſtrokes preſiding truth impreſt,
And unreſiſted paſſion ſtorm'd the breaſt.

Then Johnſon *came, inſtructed from the ſchool,*
To pleaſe in method, and invent by rule,
His ſtudious patience, and laborious art,
By regular approach eſſay'd the heart:
Cold approbation gave the ling'ring bays,
For thoſe who durſt not cenſure, ſcarce could praiſe.
A mortal born—he met the general doom,
But left, like Egypt's king, a laſting tomb.

The wits of Charles found eaſier ways to fame,
Nor wiſh'd for Johnſon's *art, or* Shakeſpeare's *flame,*
Themſelves they ſtudied, as they felt they writ,
Intrigue was plot, obſcenity was wit,

Vice always found a ſympathetic friend,
They pleas'd their age, and did not mean to mend,
Yet bards like theſe aſpir'd to laſting praiſe,
And proudly hop'd to pimp in future days:
Their cauſe was general, their ſupports were ſtrong,
Their ſlaves were willing, and their reign was long:
'Till ſhame regain'd the poſt that ſenſe betray'd,
And virtue call'd oblivion to her aid.

Then cruſh'd by rules, and weaken'd as refin'd,
For years the power of tragedy declin'd:
From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
'Till declamation roar'd, while paſſion ſlept:
Yet ſtill did virtue deign the ſtage to tread,
Philoſophy remain'd, though nature fled.
But forc'd at length her antient reign to quit,
She ſaw great FAUSTUS *lay the ghoſt of wit;*
Exulting folly hail'd the joyful day,
And pantomime and ſong confirm'd her ſway.

But who the coming changes can preſage,
And mark the future periods of the ſtage?
Perhaps (for who can gueſs th' effects of chance?)
Here Hunt *may box, or* Mahomet *may dance.*

Hard is his lot, that here by fortune plac'd,
Muſt watch the wild viciſſitudes of taſte,
With every meteor of caprice muſt play,
And chace the new-blown bubbles of the day.
Ah! let not cenſure term our fate our choice,
The ſtage but echoes back the public voice:
The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
For we that live to pleaſe, muſt pleaſe to live.

Then

Then prompt no more the follies you decry,
As tyrant's doom their tools of guilt to die;
'Tis your's this night to bid the reign commence,
Of reſcu'd nature, and reviving ſenſe;
To chaſe the charms of ſound, the pomp of ſhew,
For uſeful mirth, and ſalutary woe;
Bid Cynic virtue form the riſing age,
And truth diffuſe her radiance from the ſtage.

In this ſituation has Mr. Garrick ever ſince continued, where, both by his conduct as a manager, and his unequalled merit as an actor, he has, from year to year, added to the entertainment of the public; whoſe taſte he has, with every becoming judgment and aſſiduity, invariably conſulted; nor, indeed, has the public been unmindful of ſuch eminent ſervices. Honoured with the notice of ſome of the firſt perſonages (foreigners as well as natives) his ambition has been fully gratified, whilſt the ſubordinate ranks have contributed to raiſe him to that ſtate of eaſe and affluence, which muſt be agreeable to every man who reſpects diſtinguiſhed abilities!

As an actor, to deſcribe the peculiar excellencies in the great variety of characters he ſuſtains, would render it a taſk too arduous, as well as too extenſive, for the limits of this work; beſide, it would be at preſent unneceſſary, as where is the theatrical writer that has not one time or other pauſed upon this ſubject? We cannot, however, diſmiſs this part of his character, without being led to the following obſervations: Burbage, the hero of

Shakeſpeare's days, was only fortunate in tragedy; Betterton, who flouriſhed in the polite age of Charles II. was with Booth, principally confined to the ſame walk: Wilkes ſeparately courted the tragic and comic muſe, but eſtabliſhed no reputation but in the latter; Quin was narrowed in theatrical declamation, whilſt Cibber's peculiar excellence lay in his fops. Thus we ſee each of thoſe great names attached to their particular limits, till the eccentric genius of a Garrick united the *univerſality* of acting in one perſon, and left the ſuperiority of his excellencies to this hour undecided in the very contraſted walks of Richard and Dorilas, Lear and Drugger, Hamlet and Fribble.

To thoſe extenſive qualities of an actor, Mr. Garrick has added the name of *poet*; nor can we think the claim unmerited, when we reflect on the great variety of excellent prologues and epilogues he has, from time to time, ſupplied the ſtage with. The characters of Sterling, Mrs. Heidelberg, and Canton (in the Clandeſtine Marriage) we are told, are likewiſe of his pencil; together with the *petit* pieces of *Lethe*, *Miſs in her Teens*, *Catharine and Petruchio*, and the *Male Coquette*. We will not, however, forfeit the character of impartiality, in aſſerting his being equal to many of our cotemporary bards; or that his poetry is not confined to a certain *quaintneſs* of expreſſion, and *happy alluſion* to the *times*, which, though they heighten their reliſh at preſent, may in the ſame proportion (as they will be leſs underſtood) decline with poſterity.

In

In reſpect to epic poetry, the late ſample, and we believe the only one he has ever given us, (the Jubilee Ode on Shakeſpeare) proves an inferiority to his other writings. His images want magnitude for ſuch an object, nor does he always apply them with propriety. This little production drew a crowd of critics on his back; and in particular that celebrated literary Leviathan, Johnſon, who, ſpeaking of Mr. Garrick's poetical abilities, ſaid, "Little "Davy is a very good actor but as to *poetry*, "he never wrote but *one* line in his life." What line that is, the cynic has left undecided.

Such a ſarcaſm, however it may carry the air of *rude impartiality*, *recent* obſervation on the very ſingular character who expreſſed it, leads us to ſuſpect it may proceed from other motives. Intereſt, we find by his example, can even ſhape the tongue of a philoſopher to expreſs what notes it pleaſes; and *(O horrendum dictu!)* equally degrade the man of acknowledged abilities with the ſordid plebeian. Mr. Garrick, though confeſſedly the *firſt* actor, is by no means the *laſt* writer. His judicious alterations of many of Shakeſpeare's and Johnſon's plays alone, would reſcue him from this cenſure, as by ornamenting the beauties of thoſe writers in the *full dreſs* of the ſtage, he has made them more generally and pleaſingly known, than the *deſhabille* of the cloſet would permit.

SPRANGER

SPRANGER BARRY, Eſq.

FEW theatrical people are ignorant, that we are indebted to Ireland for the birth of Mr. Barry, and to his early misfortunes for coming on the ſtage, where he has ſo long ſhone (only rivalled by our Engliſh Roſcius) with ſuch advantages to himſelf and pleaſure to the public.

Mr. Barry's firſt outſet in life was genteel. He began the world in the ſilverſmith buſineſs in Dublin, with a tolerable fortune of his own, which, with 1500 l. he got with his wife (no inconſiderable ſum at that time for the merdian of Ireland) enabled him to move in the firſt ſphere of mechanical buſineſs.—When we conſider the talents that time has ſince brought to light in this gentleman, we cannot wonder at his not long remaining in this ſituation. The dull entertainment of a counter, with the more inſipid detail of a mechanical profeſſion, claſs but ill with the ſentiments of the buſkin, or the laugh of the ſock; in ſhort, they ſeem incompatible with buſineſs; Mr. Barry's ill ſucceſs proved it, as the third, or fourth year of his marriage found

ound him a bankrupt. The conſequence of hich was, that having made up his affairs the beſt manner he could, he applied his urſuits to the ſtage, and ſoon after made his rſt appearance in Othello.

Never did a young actor, perhaps, ſhew ch judgment in the choice of a part. The rmony of his voice, and the manly beauty his perſon, ſpoke him alike the warrior nd the lover; and thoſe who doubted of the oet's conſiſtency, in forming a mutual paſon between ſuch characters as Othello and eſdemona, were now convinced of his proriety. They ſaw from Mr. Barry's pleaſing nd affecting manner of ſupporting his part, hat mere *colour* could not be a barrier to ffection, and they united in opinion with the eroine of the play, "of ſeeing Othello's viage through his mind."

Though Mr. Barry, from his firſt entering n the Iriſh ſtage, reached the top of his rofeſſion, he only continued two winters here; probably the declining ſituation of the heatre at that time was the occaſion of it, hich Mr. Victor, in his theatrical memoirs eſcribes to be very great, on account of the ermiſſion of young fellows behind the ſcenes, ho, from being fluſhed with liquor, and heir out-door connexions with the actreſſes, ften committed ſuch bare-faced indecencies, s baniſhed the ſober and judicious.

The following inſtance, which is related by Mr. Victor in his account of the Iriſh theatres,

atres, will give a ſufficient proof to what de-
gree of neglect and barbarity the ſtage wa-
then degenerated.

In the laſt act of the tragedy of Lear, th-
old king is diſcovered ſleeping on the lap o-
Cordelia; Mr. Garrick and Mrs. Woffington-
who performed thoſe characters this night
were juſt diſpoſing themſelves in this ſituatio-
for the riſing of the curtain, when a drunke-
young fellow of faſhion threw himſelf on th-
other ſide of Mrs. Woffington, nor could h-
be prevailed on to riſe, either by his friend-
or by the ſhame of appearing before an au-
dience in this manner, 'till ſome minutes af-
ter the curtain drew up, when the hiſſes o-
the whole houſe emboldened ſome of th-
ſervants to drag him away. Whatever wa-
the motive, Mr. Barry arrived in London th-
latter end of the year 1744, where his fam-
had reached before, and which readily pro-
cured him at Drury-lane theatre, under Mr-
Fleetwood, a ſalary, and other advantages, i-
every reſpect adequate to his merit.

His ſucceſs here was more than could b-
expected. The public not only allowed hi-
to be original in ſome parts of tragedy, bu-
capital in many, particularly in thoſe where
feeling and grace are conſpicuous. From tra-
gedy he extended himſelf to genteel comedy,
where he had equal ſucceſs, particularly i-
Lord Townly, in the *Provoked Huſband*; a
part with which his Royal Highneſs Frederic-
Prince of Wales was ſo ſtruck, that he next
day

y ſent Mr. Barry a polite meſſage, with offer of the attendance of his dancing-after for three months; adding, "that, in opinion, he wanted only the addition of little *manner*, to make him the firſt Lord ownly in the world." The very great re-ption Mr. Barry has ſince met with in this rt, has fully proved his Royal Highneſs's ediction.

It is very ſuppoſeable that Mr. Barry, at at time of life, poſſeſſed of ſuch natural d acquired abilities, and in ſo firſt-rate a uation on the theatre, muſt be a favourite the ladies. The theatrical records of that y, tell us he was ſo in a very eminent gree, and very probably acted in *reality* with any a noble Lord, what Iago only ſuppo-"ſtepped between them and their ſheets." owever, from the ſecrecy with which theſe norous congreſſes were conducted, as well the impropriety there would be in diſ-rbing the peace and happineſs of families, e ſhall paſs on to his more *honourable* con-xions.

Miſs Noſſiter, a young lady of a pleaſing gure, genteel accompliſhments, and no in-nſiderable merit as an actreſs, made her rſt appearance at Covent-garden theatre, bout the year 1754, in Juliet. As Mr. Barry layed Romeo at that houſe, (and in the itical opinion, *the* Romeo) ſhe received her nowledge of the elements of this character om him. Whether it was the tender ſcenes

with

with which that tragedy abounds, or the prevailing manner of the preceptor, made the impreſſion, we cannot determine; but the report of that time hath left it upon record that his leſſons were not only *aptly* received, but that the lovers found more *felicity* in the parts, than the poet originally deſigned.

Whilſt he was thus enjoying the pleaſures of ſo tender a connexion, he, in concert with Mr. Woodward, in the year 175[illegible] planned a theatrical deſcent on Ireland, and landing there immediately with a veteran band, after many pitched battles, finally routed Marſhal Sheridan, many years commander in chief of the Hibernian troops; indeed it is thought had the general ſtood his ground and inſpired his troops by his preſence, he would have come off victorious, or at leaſt have ſo harraſſed the enemy as to defeat the purpoſes of their ſettling; but dejected at ſo ſudden an attack, he, like a ſecond James, abdicated his government, and idly waiting the ſucceſs of a handful of his forces, under lieutenant general Victor, an officer who knew no more of war than the theory, had the mortification of ſeeing the flower of his army cut off by *famine* and *deſertion*.

The victory was hardly obtained, when it was clouded by the death of the fair Juliet. Naturally of a delicate conſtitution, which the fatigues of her profeſſion made more ſo, ſhe fell into a decay, which operating as an alterative,

rative, did not declare her danger, till her re was remedileſs; when, toward the cloſe the year 1759, ſhe *performed*, for the laſt ne, on the great theatre of this world. By r death, however, ſhe teſtified her connexi- s with her Romeo were of the pureſt nd; as by her will ſhe left him ſole exe- tor and legatee of her effects, which amount- in caſh, cloaths, and jewels, to upwards of oo l.

Though there is no doubt of the affection r. Barry bore this lady, yet, like Macheath, he could no more brood over the memory *one woman*, than *one guinea*;" he therefore the death of Mr. Dancer, (one of his mpany) threw his eyes on that gentleman's r relict, (the preſent Mrs. Barry) who ſee- our hero in the light he has been ſo of- viewed by the fair ſex, met his warmeſt ſhes. For the particulars of this connex- , which afterwards terminated in a marri- e, as well as their return to England, we uſt refer our readers to the firſt of theſe atrical memoirs.

As an actor, it is almoſt ſuperfluous to ention any thing, after an approved ſervice upwards of thirty years, during which time has been univerſally allowed to be imped- in his claim to the theatrical chair by ne but Mr. Garrick; and even with this ghty *chief* the *paſs* has been diſputed in me characters — given up in two, *Othello* d *Romeo*. We ſhall therefore, to avoid falling

falling into thoſe criticiſms that have been
often repeated, conclude this gentleman's m
moirs, with wiſhing (for the ſake of the pr
ſent declining ſituation of the ſtage) a renov
tion of thoſe powers that have acquired hi
ſo deſervedly a firſt-rate reputation.

Mr. REDDISH.

THERE is a greater equality in the d
poſition of human affairs, than moſt m
imagine, or the line of their philoſophy w
ſuffer them to fathom: *Fortune*, no doub
would ſometimes ſpoil this ſyſtem by wit
drawing her aſſiſtance, but *Accident* ſuppli
her place; and, by a kind of caprice, forc
from her thoſe benefits ſhe did not origina
mean to beſtow. Every man's experien
will furniſh him with caſes in point. N
need we go farther than the hero of th
page, who, from being very ſparingly ſup
plied either from *nature*, or *fortune*, is indeb
ed merely to *accident* for his preſent ſtage co
ſequence at Drury-lane.

Mr. Reddiſh is the ſon of a tradeſman wh
lived at Froome, and who, according to h
ſon's * account of him, "was eſteemed th
able

* Vide memoirs of Mr. Reddiſh of Drur
lane, in *Miller's London Mercury*, No. X.

ſt reaſoner on the ſide of Deiſm ſince the rated Dr. Tindal." A ſtrange compli- from a ſon to a father, who rather leave him undiſtinguiſhed from the mon claſs of mechanics, would mark him the *ignominy* of being a *notorious offender* nſt the eſtabliſhed laws of his country! r. Reddiſh was put to a grammar-ſchool he place he was born in till of age to pprentice; and an opportunity offering, hat period, he was accordingly bound to rgeon at Plymouth. How long after his ntures were ſigned, he quitted his pro- on for the ſtage is uncertain, though we not ſo about the motives. Plymouth be- in war time, equally the reſort of the *ary* and *players*, the pageantry of theſe eſſions ſoon affected his mind, but which ncline to cauſed no inconſiderable ſtruggle; e ſpirit-ſtirring drum" at one time ſound- n his ears laurels and glory, whilſt at her the buſkined hero and happy lover eſſed his favourite wiſhes: the debate, wever, after many ſtruggles, was at length cluded, and our hero gave his choice to *pomene*, preferring that death which is at- ded with a joyful reſurrection to that om whoſe bourne no traveller returns."

t the cloſe of one of the ſummer thea- al campaigns in Plymouth, he, therefore, de an offer of his theatrical abilities; but managers of that company, ſeeing more *ination* than *genius* about him, waved the ſolicitation,

ſolicitation, under the pretence of its be diſagreeable to his maſter. Determined for ſtage, he was no way diſcomforted at t but proceeded to Norwich, where he taken in at not much more than fifteen ſ lings a week, and where his caſt of parts the firſt ſeaſon were ſuch as are always insignificant to be named in the play-bill a metropolis.

Thinking his merit not done proper juſti to there, after *toiling* for about two years, came up to town, and getting an engag ment at Richmond, was the hero of t ſtage for a whole ſummer. Intoxicated w this ſucceſs, the beginning of the winter applied to Mr. Rich and Mr. Garrick for engagement, but was refuſed by both; the latter for Mr. Fleetwood, who made firſt appearance along with Mr. O'Brian fo after at Drury-lane theatre. Thus ſhut o from London, he was on the point of turning to country cantonments, when ve fortunately for our hero he was picked by Mr. Woodward, who was then enliſti for Crow-ſtreet theatre, Dublin, and by th gentleman carried over to Ireland, amo the *lumber* troops that formed that expe tion.

As his terms with Mr. Woodward we *quantum meruit*, his pay far from kept pa with his expences; he often held up his co ſequence to the manager as a title to increa it, but he could never get him to join opini

ion with him. — Reddiſh appealed to his *r*, Woodward to the *receipts of the houſe*; hat from this diſunion of ſentiments, a her diſunion might be naturally expected. ſoon after engaged himſelf to Moſſop, made a feeble ſtand at Smock-Alley, and played ſeveral characters with tolerable eſs.

rom his rank on the ſtage, however, his ry could be but inconſiderable, and even (if we may judge from the conſtant tice of the manager) not regularly paid. is but ill agreed with ſo profeſſed a ſon pleaſure as Mr. Reddiſh; however, he was lved on making good the deficiencies, by ng his credit every extenſion it would r, thinking, perhaps, ſome lucky circum- ce, ſuch as a good benefit, or payment arrears, would ſupport it; or what is re probable, not thinking any thing at all ut the matter.

Whilſt he was thus giving the reins to his ences, his creditors became clamorous; miſes were become too cold ſecurities to ſt to; beſide, they had been repeated ſo n, and under ſuch different modes, that ſubject was quite exhauſted. In this di- ma what muſt be done? His benefit was ning round, on which the flower of his es depended; and if he was deprived of his rty at ſo critical a juncture, his ruin was in- able. In *war* and *love* we are told every ſtra- em is fair, our hero thought it would be more n *diſtreſs*; his propitious ſtars therefore, juſt this moment, propounded to him a ſcheme, which,

which, whilſt it gave every air of ſecuri his creditors, left it ſtill with himſelf to ſa their demands.

As ſoon as his ſcheme was properly con ed, he ſent for all his creditors, and in a ſpeech, (probably written by one of hi vourite poets under equal circumſtances) plained to them the pain he ſuffered from being able to diſcharge their ſeveral dema "that from his inability, he was afraid *honour* (a principle he held above all th *moſt ſacred*) was liable to be called in queſ that therefore he would riſque that pledge more when it had been (not from intent ſo often forfeited; that he called them t ther then to *promiſe* no longer but to *perf* which he hoped they would underſtand ſuch from the following plan he had arra for the diſcharge of their demands, which to beg their acceptance of part of their ſev debts in tickets, and the remainder ſhould paid in caſh from the receipts of the b the morning after his benefit, by the treaſu to whom he would give an order for that p poſe."

A ſcheme ſo exceedingly plauſible, tric out with all the advantages of *acting*, infa ly ſucceeded;—the bills were printed,—tick delivered, — *news-paper puffs* diſtributed which *laſt* none was a readier hand)—and

The hiſtorical Tragedy of

RICHARD THE THIRD,

With the abominable Murder

OF HIS

TWO YOUNG NEPHEWS in the Tower,

ſtan

ed in every corner of that metropolis, in not an inch leſs than *eight feet long*.

The expected night at length arrived, and houſe, from the intereſt of his creditors, now became a party concerned in his fits, filled apace;—but, O mortifying diſery! when the tickets he had given as part rites were offered, they were refuſed as *rious* by the door-keepers; fame inſiſted ſtrongthey were refuſed by Mr. Reddiſh's order, had privately inſtructed them with the ſe-; however, the people going along with ir families would not be diſappointed, but down their money, ſtill imagining it could nothing but a miſtake, which muſt be rectifias ſoon as known. Next morning, however, nd Reddiſh's lodgings ſurrounded by his credi-, whom their late diſappointment had made watchful as fowlers for their deſtin'd prey;" alas! the bird was flown; our hero had been practiſed in the knowledge of human nature to have expected this viſit, he therefore wiſedecamped for England the night before.

Soon after his arrival in London he paid his dreſſes to Miſs H——t of Drury-lane theatre, lady who Churchill particularly compliments his *Roſciad*; though, from her preſent face figure, one would be to led imagine ſuch a mpliment was but a *poetical licence*; however, ere were other *douceurs*, beſide charms; this y had an annuity of 200l. ſettled on her *former ſervices*, which gave every ſpur to affiduity, and which terminated, after a ſhort quaintance, in an honourable ſurrender. Did prudence

prudence form any part of Mr. Reddish's cha-
racter, he might have lived very comfortably o
those *wages of dishonour*; but the man of bri
liant fashion was the character he must fill
not exist; hence the springs of dissipation we
let loose, which in a very little time reduc
him to the *meanness* of making his wife sell th
annuity on terms which none but an *ungrate*
spendthrift would have accepted. To wh
situation he would have, after this, been brou
may be easily concluded, did not fortune i
terest herself particularly in his favour: th
patent of Covent-garden getting into oth
hands on the resignation of Mr. Beard, the la
Mr. Powell was called up from Drury-lane t
be one of the joint managers; this opened
chasm for him to fill, and Mr. Holland havi
at that time no principal performer to relie
him, he was taken in by Mr. Garrick at a goo
salary for want of a better.

The character he first made his appearance i
here was Posthumous in Cymbeline; a pa
which, from the kindness of an indulgent a
dience on a first appearance, he flattered hi
self he was original in; and for the sake
handing down to posterity such uncomm
merit, he was at the expence of sixty-five gu
neas in having a whole length of himself pai
ed in that character for the then exhibiti
at Spring-gardens, where he regularly atten
ed above four hours every day, for the spa
of six weeks, like a second Narcissus, fallin
in love with his own reflexion.

If it ſhould be aſked what merit Mr. Reddiſh poſſeſſes as an actor, we anſwer, far from being conſiderable; but ſhould it be aſked, does it entitle him to fill one of the firſt forums at ſuch a theatre as Drury-lane? we anſwer *no*; for that he owes his preſent ſtage conſequence to the deſertion of Powel, and the death of Holland; and though vanity has more than once prompted him to declare himſelf *ſecond to none but Mr. Garrick*, till he can diveſt himſelf of a ſtiff, heavy figure, a ſet face, and a broken monotony of voice, he may aſſure himſelf the *critical* public will rate him many degrees inferior to Mr. Barry.

Mr. AICKIN.

THOUGH this gentleman happens to have nothing very particular in his hiſtory, his merit as an actor, and his rank on the ſtage, oblige us to open a niche for him in the temple of theatrical biography.

Mr. Aickin adds to the train of performers, who have been *broke* (to uſe a theatrical expreſſion for a firſt appearance) on the Iriſh ſtage: born in Dublin, and being the ſon of an eminent weaver of that metropolis, his father deſigned him for that buſineſs, where there is little doubt he would have eſtabliſhed

himſelf as a capital tradeſman, did his intentions ſecond the endeavours of his family; but the ſtage (which has a variety of charms for a young man, who has any *penchant* that way) ſolicited him ſo ſtrongly, that after having in vain ſtruggled to attach himſelf to buſineſs for a long while, he at laſt publicly declared his intentions, and at once abandoned the *ſhuttle* for the *truncheon*.

The firſt part he ever appeared in was in George Barnwell, in ſome of the country towns of Ireland; where, whatever his applauſe might have been, we believe it was no difficult matter to compute his profits. The life of an itinerant player generally abounds with ſo much diſtreſs, as to make it only ſupportable to two kinds of people; thoſe who are under the enthuſiaſm of the ſtage, or thoſe who, from their indolence and obſcurity, can poſſibly expect no better alternative: our hero being under the influence of the former, was totally cured of rambling after a few campaigns; when looking forward to the capital as the only place to reap any benefits from his profeſſion, he ſheltered himſelf from the inclemencies of a country company, under the *urbane* roof of Smock Alley theatre.

In this ſituation he remained for ſome time where, though not under all his former embaraſſments, yet in no proper direction either to cultivate his talents, or his fortune. It is a deſpicable neceſſity that the managers of the Dublin theatres have long laboured under that either on account of their poverty, diſ-

patien

pation, or want of attention, they do not pay their performers always very regularly; by these means they are often obliged to look for those who will *give them credit*, rather than those that will *do* them credit; and hence those performers occupy all the principal parts, whilst others of greater merit, who have no money to lend, or interest to command, are obliged to support characters, as unsuitable to their cast as disgraceful to their manager. Whether Mr. Aickin was piqued at this arrangement or not, we cannot decide; however, he left Ireland about the year 1764, and soon after got an engagement at Drury-lane theatre.

Previous to his leaving Ireland, he married a lady of that kingdom of family and fortune; and as there are some circumstances relative to this match that mark, in the person of Mr. Aickin, the natural warmth and openness of the Irish, we shall take the liberty of introducing them in this place.

The lady and he being of different religions, he found it somewhat difficult to prevail on her father; after soliciting for some time, but in vain, he agreed with her to carry her off; and, for this purpose, the night was fixed. As the hour appointed was to be very late, Mr. Aickin, with the chosen few who were to sustain his attack, supped at a tavern in the neighbourhood of his mistress, where by accident they were joined by an *English gentleman*, who being alone, begged permission to sit with them: the bottle circulating briskly after supper, the conversation consequently took a lively turn, in which the

ſtranger bore his part with ſo much ſatisfaction to Mr. Aickin, that ſtarting up in a tranſport of affection, he ſhook him by the hand, and after telling him he looked upon him to be one of the honeſteſt fellows in the world, and his friend, he ſaid he would give him an inſtant proof of the latter; then pulling out a caſe of piſtols from his pocket, continued, "Know, *my dear* "*boy*, I'm engaged to run away with a lady this "night, ſupported by theſe gentlemen; you "ſhall be of my party,—here are the *poppers*, "—come away,—we have not a minute to "ſpare."

The other, petrified at *this inſtance of his friendſhip*, for ſome time did not know what to make of it; till ſeeing it was merely the effuſion of youth and friendſhip, he told him, "he "was much obliged to him for his partiality, "and that he would readily attend him, but "meeting with an accident in his left leg a few "days before, his not being able to run might "be the means of diſcovering the party." His excuſe was ſufficient, and after damning the accident that deprived him of ſo valuable an aſſociate, Aickin ſallied out, and in a few hours was as good as his word.

Since his arrival in London, having greater opportunities to try the force of his theatrical powers than before, every year may be ſaid to have improved them: from a pleaſing perſon, no inconſiderable ſhare of judgment, and a ſonorous, diſtinct voice, he has ſucceeded in the impaſſioned declamatory parts of tragedy, inſomuch that, from his being ſo often *caſt* in this

line,

line, his intimates of the green room have nick-named him *Tyrant Aickin*, a character, in private life, no man is more the reverse of, either in temper, or the duties of friendship. We do not, however, assert that all his merit lies in tragedy, when we have seen him fill, with so much pleasure, the serious parts of comedy,—such as Sir John Flowerdale, in the *School for Fathers*; Stockwell, in the last new comedy of the *West-Indian*, &c. There is a pleasing harmony in his tones, and a precision of expression that gives force to those characters, and even set off the generous sentiments they abound with.

Mr. KING.

WHEN a man unites an excellence in his profession, with an excellence of private character, he is doubly endeared to society; indeed, either are so powerful, that they often give an independant estimation in the world, and good nature or prejudice will never be wanting to defend the one, whilst the tongue of scandal is busy in bespattering the other.

No man has, perhaps, associated both with greater propriety than the hero of these memoirs. To his *public* character the town has long since borne uncontroverted testimony; to his *private*, the very extensive circle of a gen-

teel acquaintance, ſubſcribe with a pleaſure, always reſulting from the *feel* of ſenſible friendſhips.

Mr. King comes from a very reſpectable family in ſome of the country parts of England, and was educated at a good grammar-ſchool in the town of his birth; but being early captivated with the ſtage, like the generality of enthuſiaſts, he abandoned every connexion for this profeſſion, by entering himſelf into ſome of the country companies. His parents on this occaſion (which is too common a fault) behaved incautiouſly. Inſtead of endeavouring to reclaim him from ſuch a purſuit by gentle methods, and a remiſſion of the firſt offence, at once abandoned him to his fortune, as if there was a *talſmanic* power in the profeſſion, that marked its votaries with reprobation for life.

Thus thrown on the world at an early age, he rambled about the country, ſubject to all thoſe aukward diſtreſſes and adventures, that are inſeparable from this kind of life. To one of his ſprightly caſt and ſenſible turn of mind, theſe adventures were ſerviceable. It preſented to his view a number of undiſguiſed characters he could never otherwiſe have met with; beſide, it inſtructed him in the *ſchool* of *adverſity*; —an academy, though not mentioned in the catalogue of education, affords more *practical* knowledge, than the united efforts of the moſt poliſhed ſeminaries.

Tired with theſe purſuits, which however pleaſing for a time, have their inconveniences, he came to London, and entered at Drury-lane, at

at a ſmall engagement. The firſt character he appeared in there, was in the Younger Brother in Comus; a part we need not acquaint our readers, in which Mr. King could exhibit none of thoſe ſprightly powers, that have ſince ſo juſtly gained him univerſal approbation. From this he got into others of the ſame ſtamp; but from a piece of ſtage *manœuvre*, which we cannot explain at this day, Mr. King, during this engagement, never once filled a character that ſeemed ſuitable to his talents. This, probably, was the reaſon of his quitting Drury-lane ſoon after, and engaging under Mr. Sheridan in Ireland. To this genial ſpot was reſerved the maturation of his talents, as it was here he broke out a comedian of the firſt rank, by going almoſt through the whole round of comic characters, with no leſs applauſe to himſelf than to the ſatisfaction of the nobility and gentry of that kingdom. Every one was ready to do juſtice to ſuch abilities; and whilſt he moved in the circle of a very diſtinguiſhed friendſhip, he was no leſs the delight of thoſe *genuine* ſons of humour, the inhabitants of the galleries.

Mr. King, finding this country ſo friendly to his talents, probably would have made it his perpetual reſidence, had it not been for thoſe theatrical wars that ſoon after divided that metropolis, ſo as to occaſion a general defection in the principal performers. The occaſion of theſe wars, we have more than once recited in the courſe of theſe memoirs: we have therefore only to ſay, that Mr. King, foreſeeing the lengths thoſe diviſions would run into (though

highly in the eſtimation of the public) quitted the ſervice, and came over, once more, to general Garrick. The fame of his merit, however, flew before him, and readily procured him a genteel ſalary; and the manager was ſo ſenſible of having recovered ſuch an acquiſition to his ſtage, that he himſelf gave out the firſt play (*The Conſcious Lovers*) in which he was to appear in, and particularly mentioned *the part of Tom by Mr. King from Dublin.*

Mr. King had been ſo many years in Ireland, and when in England ſo narrowed in his parts, that he was quite new to the public. Under this novelty was included excellence; for, from a few ſpecimens which he ſucceſſively gave of his comic abilities, he transferred the good opinion of the people of Ireland to England; and the ſame merit, both public and private, gained him the ſame line of reputation; he has therefore been long ſince accounted one of the beſt comic actors of his time; take him all in all, perhaps, the beſt. But what ſeemed to confirm his eſtimation was, the part of Lord Ogleby in the *Clandeſtine Marriage*, (produced by Meſſrs. Colman and Garrick about ſeven years ago) a character, one would imagine, not much in his caſt, which, however, he has executed ſo maſterly, as to crown him with applauſe, and greatly aſſiſt the run of that excellent comedy.

On the death of Mr. Powel, which happened at Briſtol in the ſummer of 1769, Mr. King purchaſed his ſhare of the Briſtol patent; a purchaſe that has ſince turned out very conſiderable

rable to him in the double capacity of actor and manager; with this, his ſalary and benefits of Drury-lane, his annual receipts are very conſiderable, which muſt afford a particular ſatisfaction to every mind that has the leaſt eſteem for extraordinary abilities, ſet off by a modeſt, ſenſible, irreproachable conduct.

As an actor, his long eſtabliſhed reputation with the town, makes it almoſt unneceſſary to ſubjoin any thing more to public applauſe. There is a pert vivacity, with a ſly knowledge of the world, which he poſſeſſes both in his face and manner, that are peculiarly his own, and render him an original in theſe caſts of parts.

As a prologue-ſpeaker in the comic ſtyle, he is undoubtedly unapproachable (but by Mr. Garrick.) There is a happy diſtinction in his eaſe, manner, familiarity, and acting thoſe dramatic exordiums, ſo as to render them, in his poſſeſſion, entertainments of the firſt kind; indeed, the audience are ſo ſenſible of this, that they never omit calling for them on thoſe nights the pieces are repreſented, with an avidity and impatience that ſtrongly indicate their pleaſure.

Mr. DODD.

THERE is ſcarcely a walk on the ſtage that audiences are more pleaſed with, nor one leſs generally underſtood, than that of a *coxcomb*. A pert vivacity, a quaintneſs of ſtyle, and impudent familiarity, ſo conſtitute this character, that to the groſs of an audience who are not able to ſeparate *breeding* from *affectation* it paſſes for a fine gentleman. To mark this ſtrongly, ſo as (in the language of painters) to make the *correction* obvious, muſt belong to an actor at the top of his profeſſion.

Whether Mr. Dodd is indebted moſt to application or art, for reaching this point, we cannot determine. If we would hazard a *critique* founded upon general obſervation, we would ſay both; as excellence in any profeſſion is readieſt attained by the former aſſiſting the latter. For however we would diſclaim art as the *miſtreſs*, as the *handmaid* ſhe is eſſentially neceſſary to be conſulted.

The little hero of theſe memoirs was early drawn to the ſtage by that dazzle which the tinſel of the profeſſion general gives to young minds. Born in London under the immediate influence of the Muſes, he became their *devotee* whilſt at the grammar-ſchool in Holborn; but

what confirmed him in an opinion which inclination had begun, were the compliments he received on his playing the part of Davus in the Andria of Terence, a little before he left ſchool. Theſe were irreſiſtible, and ſoon decided him to ſtrike at the ſtage, as the grand object from whence he was to derive his future happineſs and emolument.

At the age then of ſixteen (a period when the generality of boys are getting through the claſſics) we find Mr. Dodd "facing the naked "eye of an audience." The firſt part he played in public was Roderigo, in an itinerant company at Sheffield; a part which he went through with ſuch ſucceſs, as flattered his warmeſt inclinations; and as the general run of country companies are not very ſtrong in numbers, Mr. Dodd was ſo encouraged by this firſt onſet, that he occaſionally undertook the principal characters in tragedy: here likewiſe he met with equal ſucceſs; but how deſervedly may very well be imagined by thoſe who know the almoſt unattainable ſummit of univerſality; an height *only* reached by *one*, who has been no leſs elegantly than juſtly ſtyled, "though *little*, "yet the map of men."

As ſoon as his ſummer's expedition was over at Sheffield, he proceeded to Norwich, where he ſettled for ſome time. Here he extended his parts in comedy, and at the ſame time extended his reputation; however, he did not ſeem to loſe ſight of the Buſkin, as he occaſionally took it up with a degree of ſatisfaction almoſt inſeparable from young performers; and meeting

no-

no diſcouragement from his audience to rebate a paſſion for a walk to which he was never called by nature, he divided his attachments between the comic and tragic muſe.

Mr. Dodd continued thus an inconſiderable *ſervant of all work*, till his engagement with Mr. Arthur, maſter of the Bath company. The ſuperior applauſe he met with in comedy from this audience (which vies with London for criticiſm and politeneſs) led him to debate this queſtion, *whith was moſt his advantage, to be conſidered a midling, general player, or an excellent comedian?* Prudence, and the love of fame, fixed him to declare for the latter; and from this time forward he cultivated his comic talents with ſuch aſſiduity, as not only gained him the general approbation of the Bath audience, but encouraged Meſſrs. Garrick and Lacy to engage him at a genteel ſalary, at Drury-lane.

In the winter of 1765, he made his firſt appearance there in the character of Faddle, in Mr. Moore's *Foundling*; nor could any performer be happier in the choice of a part, as every line of it ſeems written to expreſs that particular ſtyle of acting Mr. Dodd is in the poſſeſſion of. Under ſo excellent a judge as Mr. Garrick, there was little to be apprehended (from the ſpecimen he gave of his abilities) that he would be improperly *caſt*; that great *manager*, as well as *actor*, ſaw the line of his merit, and gave it every judicious latitude it would bear; till by degrees, he has produced a performer

performer who gives no inconſiderable conſequence to his company.

As an actor, Mr. Dodd, in the airy, genteel coxcomb, certainly claims originality. There are many other parts in low comedy, and as a ſinger, in which he is very uſeful, but in this we think he ſtands alone; his *voice*, *manner*, and above all, his *figure*, is happily ſituated to expreſs that light *degagée* vivacity, ſo neceſſary to finiſh this character. We are ſenſible, however, that there are ſome critics who laugh at propriety of figure, particularly Churchill, who ſays,

Before ſuch merit all diſtinctions fly,
Pritchard's genteel, and Garrick's ſix feet high.

But notwithſtanding ſuch authorities, we will reſt it on the judgment of any impartial ſpectator, whether the extreme bulk, and unwiedly figure of Mrs. Clive in the part of Phillis in the *Conſcious Lovers*, did not belie the idea he had conceived of Steele's Chambermaid.

Mr.

Mr. MOODY.

IT is no eaſy matter, when people adopt any profeſſion, to prevent their going too faſt for want of prudence. A deſire to excel, is almoſt a leading principle in every breaſt. We often miſtake *inclination* for *genius*, without weighing the force of our powers, or the depth of our abilities.

The hero of theſe memoirs, were his deſires alone to be conſulted, would have fallen an early victim to this error; and inſtead of being what he is, one of the greateſt favourites of Thalia, might have been at this day *only* ranked with your Benſleys, Inchbalds, and the long line of *titum tums* that mouth blank verſe in both houſes. His fortunate ſtars meant otherwiſe; and however he might have grumbled at the manager for ſuppreſſing his tragical rants, he turned out his beſt friend, no one having a greater title to exclaim with the poet,

One truth is clear, whatever *is*, *is right*.

Mr.

Mr. Moody was born in Cork in the kingdom of Ireland; his father's name was Cochran, who followed the profeſſion of a barber in that city, and brought up this his eldeſt ſon to the ſame trade, at which he worked, many years after he was out of his time, in Tuckey's Lane. Theſe futile circumſtances biography ſhould have over-looked, did not Mr. Moody often declare he was an Engliſhman, and born in Stanhope-ſtreet, Clare-market. What induced him to change his *name*, as well his *country*, he may undoubtedly have his *private* reaſons for; but till theſe reaſons are more univerſally known, the *public* will have their own ſuſpicions.

Naturam expellas furcâ licet, uſque recurrit, is an obſervation as far back as Horace; and it is on this principle we are to account for Mr. Moody's giving up his profeſſion, to follow the *vagaries* of the Muſes. This muſt have been ſtill more predominant, when it is conſidered in what a diſadvantageous light the ſtage appears in Ireland; a country, where even the *loweſt mechanic* riſes ſuperior, in his own eſtimation, to the foremoſt theatrical character. This general prejudice did not totally eſcape our hero; for when he had determined for the ſtage, ſooner *than he would expoſe his family*, he previouſly quitted his *capillary* profeſſion, and ſoon after *voluntarily* went, or was ſent at *his Majeſty's expence* in a *public* character (which we cannot with preciſion determine) to the Weſt Indies.

On

On his arrival in Jamaica, he readily got admittance into a company eſtabliſhed at Kingſton; and as he had his choice of parts, he claimed tragedy as the moſt favourable to his talents. Here he played Hamlet, Lear, Romeo, *&c.* with no inconſiderable reputation. Whether it was, that Mr. Moody acquitted himſelf with merit in theſe characters, or the people of that country not having their judgments poliſhed enough to be ſufficient judges, muſt be left undetermined. However it be, he was the favourite of the people, brought good houſes, and, after many years being amongſt them, left them with that kind of regret, that is ever the reſult of previous ſatisfaction.

He had worn out his early prejudices ſufficiently when he got to England, not to be *aſhamed* of applying to the managers of Drury-lane. Here, however, he would have ſtill claimed the buſkin, did he not find that walk already ſo overſtocked. Contented, therefore, with being admitted *a ſervant of all work*, like many a theatrical genius, he was thrown on the *ſhelf*, only playing the under parts of tragedy (where it is almoſt impoſſible to diſcover any traces of merit) and *vulgar* Iriſhmen. An opportunity at laſt exerted itſelf in his favour, that diſcloſed his comic abilities to the public, by being caſt for Captain O'Cutter, in Mr. Colman's new comedy of the *Jealous Wife*. His humorous manner of ſupporting this character, aſſiſted the run of the piece, and got him ſo much reputation, not only with the town in general, but the bench of critics, that even the ſatirical

Churchill,

Churchill, who was no way remarkable for aying compliments, has borne the following eſtimony to his merit:

ong, from a country ever hardly us'd,
t random cenſur'd, and by moſt abus'd,
ave Britons drawn their ſport, with no kind view,
nd judg'd the many, by the raſcal few;
rom thee, Moody, have we learn'd to raiſe,
irth from their foibles, from their virtues praiſe.

ROSCIAD.

Notwithſtanding his reputation in this part, did not bid fair for a long continuance. he infrequency of acting the play, after it d run the firſt ſeaſon, made different audi- ces almoſt regret him, and Moody was very ar ſliding into his original obſcurity, till the pearance of the *Regiſter Office*. Here he ex- ed himſelf with redoubled abilities, added ne characteriſtical features to the part, hither- unpractiſed, which thoroughly convinced public he had no equal in this line.

Some time before Mr. Bickerſtaffe brought his *Padlock*, he intended the part of Mungo Moody. His being in the country where h characters are very plenty, acquainted h their language and manner, particularly nted him out the propereſt perſon in the atre. Notwithſtanding this, Mr. Bickerſtaffe nged his mind, and gave it to Mr. Dibdin; ich, in all probability, deprived Moody of inconſiderable ſhare of reputation in a new ; however, this loſs was amply repaid him

a

a little after by his appearance in the *Jubile*
an entertainment that has now run very ne
an hundred nights to crowded audiences; a
in which, whatever is the general merit of t
piece, he has been univerſally conſidered as
principal ſupport.

To crown the hopes of his riſing reputatio
he was reſerved for Major O'Flaherty in t
laſt new comedy of the *Weſt Indian*; a ch
racter he has ſupported with ſuch judgme
and maſterly execution, as to divide applau
with the author, by making a ſubordinate ch
racter (though not the *hero* of the *fable*) t
hero of the *audience*. From this æra, he is b
come at Drury-lane, what Shuter is at Cove
garden; with this difference, that Moody
the favourite of *boxes*, as well the *galleries*.

As an actor, ſo much has been neceſſar
ſaid of him in the courſe of theſe memo
to add, would be ſuperfluous; the critical p
lic will then decide what degree of eſtimat
he muſt be in, as to induce one of our f
portrait painters to give a picture of him
two public exhibitions.

Mr. LOVE.

THE name of Love, is only an adoption made by this gentleman, from a preſſice which moſt people are ſubject to, who ink they diſgrace their families by going on ſtage, not practiſing that adage of Horace, *Virtus vera eſt nobilitas*;" or that modern e of Mr. Pope's,

Worth makes the *man*, want of it the fellow,
The reſt is nought but leather and prunella.

real name is Dance, and is ſon to the , and brother to the preſent city architect that name.

His father, being in genteel circumſtances, cated him in all the courſes of academic dy; he was firſt ſent to Weſtminſter-ſchool, rwards to Cambridge, where he not only in a good ſtock of claſſical knowledge, cultivated his genius in all thoſe acquiſiti- that render a man agreeable to ſociety, uſeful to himſelf.

When he returned from the univerſity, it at that period when Sir Robert Walpole in the meridian of court ſunſhine, tho' at ſame time in diſgrace with the people; preſs teemed both for and againſt him, nor were

were any of the malverſations of governm attributed to any other cauſe than the venal or ignorance of the miniſter himſelf. At criſis appeared a little poem, (univerſally to be Pope's, called, "*Are theſe Things ſ* in which Sir Robert was attacked with all ſpirit of ſatire, and which was ſo well ceived by the public, that a whole impre went off in two days.

Mr. Love thought this a proper time him to enter the liſts, and accordingly tak his ſtand on the miniſterial ſide, anſwered poem in a ſmall pamphlet entitled, "*Yes are, what then?*" This piece, like many o productions of that day, being conſigned to livion, it is impoſſible now to decide on merit; but the miniſter was ſo pleaſed with defence, that his ſecretary Paxton ſoon w ed on the bookſeller to enquire after author, to whom he made a preſent of a b note for 100l. telling him, at the ſame ti Sir Robert would be glad to ſee him at levee.

Unpractiſed in the ways of courts, our h underſtood this invitation *merely* in a lit ſenſe, for inſtead of writing another pamph or taking up a ſecond adverſary, he only d gled after his levee, where, tho' he was for ſ time cordially received, he at laſt came to neglected. Whether it aroſe from the *indol* concomitant on *authoriſm*, — or that he not immediately underſtand Sir Robert's m ſage, it is hard to determine; he, howe found out, when it was too late, it was t

appearan

earance of his *pen*, not his *person*, was un-
tood by the compliment.

The first current of his political success, pro-
y gave birth to his going on the stage;
being afterwards disappointed, he acquired
dislike for business, and the theatre pre-
ing itself as a life of indolence and dissi-
on, it was readily embraced by a young
who had previously cooled his father's af-
ions. Changing his name, therefore, with
sentiments, he made his first appearance in
of the country towns of England; af-
some years of probation, he went to Ireland,
e he was well received in many parts of
dy, particularly in Sir John Falstaff, and
is period wrote his much admired pro-
of "*Bucks, have at ye All*," for Mr. King,
speaking of which acquired that admira-
comedian so much applause.

fter rambling about the country parts of
kingdom for many years, he at last set sail
ngland, and prudence getting the better
mily pride, he engaged with Mr. Garrick
good salary; where his general knowledge
e stage, with his execution of some of
espeare's best comic characters, entitle him
he deserved esteem of a British audience.
t six years ago, with the assistance of his
, he built a theatre at Richmond, for
h he afterwards got a patent, and which
egance and neatness, may vie with either
y-lane or Covent-garden; here he summers
ry vacation, with some of the light troops of
houses, from the management of which,

with

with his own and wife's ſalary in the win
his annual receipts muſt be very conſiderab

As an actor, he is extremely uſeful
many parts of comedy, and ſeems to be
only imitator of Quin's manner now exiſti
His chiefeſt excellence lies in Falſtaff, Calib
Sterling, and Jobſon; and in theſe he is at p
ſent unequalled: his perſon and voice (wh
laſt is beginning to incline to an aſthm
mellowneſs) would be much againſt him
many parts he is in the poſſeſſion of, did
his judgment deſervedly proteſt him from c
ſure.

Mr. VERNON.

IT would be equally vain as unuſeful to
plore the origin of all our ſtage heroes;
profeſſion itſelf is ſuperior to ſuch an enqui
as, like the ſea ſervice, it refuſes no man for w
of birth or morals, provided he is but *a*
bodied. Indeed was a ſcrutiny of this kind
ceſſary, the public would find themſelves abr
ed of much entertainment, and the mu
taſte of a Vernon, amongſt many others, w
have been conſigned to "waſte its warbli
on the deſert air."

Early patronized by Mr. Garrick, who
accident heard and approved of his voice,

on the ſtage is eaſily accounted for; — ſt with uncommon talents for ſinging, they dily received the poliſh of art, and not de- ute of underſtanding, ſo intimate a connexi- and obſervation on our Engliſh Roſcius, ned his ideas of acting; with theſe ad- tages he was ſetting out in the morning theatrical fame, when his hiſtory opened h an event, which will be the more re- mbered, as it is *a tale of pity* left upon blic record.

Having formed an affection for Miſs Poitier, e Mrs. Thompſon, *now* Mrs. Banniſter) ich grew from their intimacy on the ſtage, made propoſals of marriage to her parents. ough the father's conſent became abſolutely ceſſary to this union from the late marriage- , the young couple, deſirous of being united, , to uſe the more emphatical words of the y, as appeared upon the trial, "I will not home till I am married") prevailed upon . Grierſon, at that time a clergyman in the oy, to perform that office on the mother's ſent. The conſequence of this marriage a warm proſecution, during which, though h intereſt was made for the offending clergy- n, and though he challenged the whole of jury, he, after a long trial, fell a ſacrifice what the lawyers call the *maidenhead* of the and he was ſentenced to be tranſported fourteen years; which operated ſo ſtrongly his mind, that he died on the paſſage, leav- behind him a diſconſolate wife and large ily.

The

The good character of the clergyman, his falling a ſacrifice for performing what hitherto done with impunity, drew the t of pity on his family, and at the ſame t fixed an odium on the parties; for thoug did not appear in the courſe of the trial, t Vernon any ways publicly aſſiſted Grier misfortunes, his afterwards ſeparating from wife fixed it too ſtrong to be eaſily wiped finding himſelf, therefore, in this predicam with the public, he ſet ſail for Ireland, de mining in that country to obliterate the loſ wife and reputation.

He was, however, yet to be purſued *events*:—in his retirement they overtook hi for happening to be in a public houſe one eve ing after the play, ſome inebriated you followed an innocent man by miſtake into t ſame room where he was; being purſued wi drawn ſwords, the poor man, though unco ſcious of any wrong, hid himſelf under a tab where one of them eſpying him, *heroically* r him through the body, of which wound died at eight o'clock next morning, leaving b hind him a wife and ſix children.

So atrocious a murder made a great noi and the parties (who were all of ſome con quence) being hotly purſued, were every o of them overtaken before they had well ſle off their drunkenneſs. Amongſt theſe grou of ruffians was one ***** heir to 400l. year eſtate, and ſtep-ſon to a Right H nourable Peer; from ſuch a proſpect of di

grac

grace, his friends puſhed all their intereſt to ſave him, which money at laſt effected, by bribing off the landlord and his wife; however, it was afterwards diſcovered that Vernon was a ſpectator, and that it was in his power alone (as it undoubtedly was) to hang or ſave him: overtures were therefore inſtantly made, and ſucceeded ſo well, that he found it his intereſt to give up his theatrical profeſſion, though on the eve of his benefit, and go down into the county of Cork with ſome of ******* friends; where, under the name of Captain Smith, he avoided being called upon as an evidence: the conſequence of which was, this band of wanton murderers took their trial with confidence, and were acquitted to the eternal ſcandal of the inactivity of Iriſh magiſtracy, and the venality of the *abſconding evidence*.

Though the affair was thus *legally* determined, the conſcientious few looked upon a man, who could with-hold his evidence on a cauſe where the rights of humanity and juſtice were ſo materially concerned as *infamous* and *abandoned*; and though *Captain Smith* ſung a good ſong, and was reckoned amongſt half bred people, a pretty gentleman, *J. Vernon* appeared a moſt deſpicable fellow; the captain himſelf began to perceive he was ſometimes treated in this light, and ſome years having paſſed ſince he left England, he judged a return to his native country adviſeable, where by this time he would appear in a renovated, if not

original character, and every thing be forgotten.

It was ſo:—poor Grierſon's ſtory, with the misfortunes of his family, were no longer remembered; and as for his *quondam* wife, ſhe drew her comforts from the philoſophy of *variety*. Having thus doubly got over his misfortunes, he re-appeared on Drury-lane ſtage with ſome *eclat*; he therefore, determining not to get nooſed a ſecond time, commenced a man of profeſſed gallantry, and from the advantages of a tolerable perſon, a public character, and a good voice, has been theſe many years a ſtanding favourite with the nymphs of old Drury, and as well known about Covent-garden as *the dial*.

If theſe purſuits did not break in upon his purſe and conſtitution, they probably would be continued; but *French-wines*, fine wenches, and an elegant chariot, work deep upon both; and our hero was juſt about to prove it ſo, did not Fortune luckily come to his aſſiſtance, by throwing in his way a jointured kept miſtreſs, (Mrs. M——y) by which means, in the character of her *Beau Garçon*, together with his ſtage appointment, he is enabled to ape the faſhions and follies of his betters.

It is ſo ſeldom found, that it is now ſcarcely expected, to meet a good actor united to a good ſinger:—Vernon ſtands an exception to this rule; for though now he only lives in point of voice, upon the echo of his former reputation, he *was* excellent in both, and did not too apparent a coxcombry eternally ſettle itſelf on his features,

features, there are many parts in comedy that would receive force from his abilities.

Mr. PARSONS.

HAD the comedian, we are now about to introduce, been attached to any of those professions where his merit might only claim mediocrity, his memoirs would be too unincidental, and consequently too unentertaining for a place here; and we should need an apology for introducing the history of a man whose private life has left so little to speak of, did not his merit as an actor claim this theatrical record.

In what country town in England Mr. Parsons was born, or what induced him to the profession of the stage, we are unacquainted with; his first appearance in public, however, is dated from Edinburgh, in the year 1758, where having the good sense to find out his forte, and modesty enough not to step out of it, he struck into a line of acting, which few young performers voluntarily do—*the parts of old men*; in this walk he early acquired reputation; and being content with it, he remained there many years cultivating his talents, till Mr. Garrick, being apprized of his merit, engaged

him for Drury-lane, where a performer in
way was then much wanted.

His firſt appearance there was in Filch,
the *Beggar's Opera*, in the beginning of
winter 1763—his wife played Mrs. Peach
the ſame night;—her merit was of the middl
kind; but his, even in this part, gained h
great reputation; and notwithſtanding th
was what was thought a finiſhed Filch at t
other houſe, Parſons ſo enriched this charac
by his dreſs, manner, and the peculiar knowi
vulgarity of his language, as promiſed him
turn out a conſiderable acquiſition to the liſt
low comedians.

It is on the ſtage, as it is in other buſineſ
thoſe men who are conſtantly employed, a
not under a neceſſity of rambling from place
place, their lives retain too great an unif
mity (except ſome unuſual events take pla
to make them remarkable:—Parſons was
der this predicament;—he found it his
tereſt to be *ſtationary*, and in the intervals
his leiſure he cultivated his talents:—th
have repaid his aſſiduity, nor has his prin
pal (Mr. Garrick) been ſparing either in
inſtructions or encouragement; ſo that he n
now be juſtly conſidered as one of the chaſ
performers of old men this, or any other ſt
has produced.

It happens with moſt actors who perfo
in *diſguiſed* characters, ſuch as *buffoons*,
men, &c, that, if they imitate the outlines
ſuch a part, they are at liberty to fill it
th

ey pleaſe; this licence often gives riſe to ffectation and unnatural acting: but Parſons, a happy attention to all the minutiæ of his aſt, ſhews a finiſhed picture of doteage, ava-ce, or whatever infirmity or paſſions he would epreſent;—the *tottering knee*, the *ſudden ſtare*, he *plodding look*, nay, the *taking out the hand-rchief*, all proclaim him a finiſhed actor in his walk. Where can, for inſtance, be a finer luſtration of Sir *Sampſon Legend*'s account of im in the character of *Old Foreſight*, in *Love Love*, where he aſks, "On what old nail, ow, "my Noſtradamus, are you poring?" han Parſons ſhews you at that time in his face d attitude. An engraving taken of him at his moment would be, perhaps, the beſt picture a *plodding aſtronomer* in the cabinets of the urious.

Mr. BADDELEY.

HOW are we to account for a perſo bred a *cook*, and ſome part of his li actually engaged in that profeſſion, afterwar acquiring no inconſiderable ſhare of reputatio as an *actor*, but by thoſe animoſities that w find ſo often ſubſiſt between *Fortune* an *Genius*? When the former, as if enviou of the latter, too readily avails herſelf every impediment to curb her flights, an thwart her inclinations.

Mr. Baddeley's firſt introduction into li was in the kitchen of our Engliſh Ariſtophane where he officiated for many years. Wh then can doubt of his abilities, who was abl to hit, with ſuch preciſion, the *taſte* of ſ great a favourite of the Muſes? His intimac with the ſtage, from the ſituation of hi maſter, flattered his natural turn; and findin his inclinations, every hour, verging toward the Green Room, he at laſt decided to ex change the *baſting ladle* for the *truncheon*, an wear the *ſpit by his ſide*, which he *handle* with ſuch dexterity in the courſe of his culinary profeſſion.

Previous

Previous to this reſolution, he was determined to go abroad. To ſtep from one profeſſion to another at once, he thought might encourage too much cenſure; flattering himſelf therefore, that a ſhort abſence from his native country would obliterate the knowledge of his former ſituation, and at the ſame time enlarge his natural qualifications for the ſtage, he hired himſelf as *valet de chambre* to a gentleman who was going the tour of Europe: being three years abroad in this capacity, he acquired ſome knowledge of the French language; and being a man of fancy and memory, he ſprinkled his mind with a number of *bagatelle* accompliſhments, which, however they unfit a man for decorating ſcience, ſhould never be overlooked by one who is to *buſtle* through life.

On his return from the Continent he appeared a *gentleman at large*; the dreſs and manners of the French he imbibed from ſympathy, and as he had ſome money from his maſter's generoſity, he was enabled to figure it away at the play-houſes, and other public places of reſort. In this round of amuſements he met with Miſs Snow (his preſent wife) the charms of whoſe voice and perſon made ſuch an impreſſion on him, as determined him to uſe every effort to obtain her. Fired with theſe reſolutions, he began to attack the fair citadel, which, under the triple diſcharge of *dreſſing*, *ſinging*, and *dancing*, ſurrendered, after an obſtinate ſiege of three weeks, to his entire diſcretion.

Baddeley, though a footman, had ever " th
" ſame whoreſon appetites and paſſions (as Si
" Sampſon Legend calls them) as his maſter;
he loved as great variety in his amours as i
his clothes, and could as unreluctantly put o
the one as the other, as his intereſt, or hi
pleaſure directed. The honey-moon was ſcarcel
paſſed, when the continual ſucceſſion of com
pliments paid to his wife's perſonal qualifica
tions ſtruck him with a thought of turnin
them to advantage; and to chooſe his ground
like an experienced general, he encouraged he
to go on the ſtage, where he accompanied he
himſelf, and where, under the character o
actreſs, ſhe had greater opportunities to b
known, and conſequently greater opportunitie
to be addreſſed.

This plan ſo *modiſhly* contrived, ſucceeded i
every article of its machination; the huſband'
indifference ſet off the charms of his wife
and thoſe who might be reſtrained from the im
practibility of ſucceeding, gave a ſcope to thei
paſſions, when they found they could indulg
them with impunity. We ſhould juſtly com
under the cenſure of repetition, did we writ
the long catalogue of amours that took plac
under this arrangement; our readers will fin
them already faithfully particularized under th
head of Mrs. Baddeley; to that page we ſha
therefore refer, whilſt we go on with that par
of his hiſtory which ſeparates itſelf fro
her's.

The public indulgence Mrs. Baddeley gav
to her gallantries, and the huſband's glarin

conceſſions

concessions, and sometimes assistance to them, roused even the *delicacy* of the Green Room; and a remonstrance *of their being so very heedless of appearances*, began to be loudly talked of by the whole company; Mr. George Garrick entered into their resentments; and happening to express himself, one morning, rather too warmly on this subject to Mr. Baddeley, the affronted Husband sent him a challenge, which very fortunately was decided next day at Hyde Park, as *bloodless* as those fought behind the scenes of old Drury.

Previous to this combat, Baddeley and his wife were discharged the theatre on account of the husband's insisting on receiving her salary, which was strongly objected to on her part; and it was the constaat buz of the Green Room, that, on account of their *morals*, they never would be re-admitted; but from whatever motive it happened, whether from Baddeley's giving a proof that he was in possession of *one* virtue, or that an *useful* actor and actress were thought distinct characters from a *dissipated* man and woman, they were, next season, taken in at their usual salaries, where they now continue, each following the bent of their own inclinations, with no other connexion between them than their mutual name.

As an actor, Mr. Baddeley has merit in several parts of low comedy;—*foreign Footmen* he is in thorough possession of. During his residence on the Continent, he acquired their *manner*, with their *pronunciation*, which sets

off his characters to critical advantage. T
a perſon who has travelled, the *ſprug*
Canton betrays the obſequiouſneſs of the *Sw*
as much as his converſation.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

10 JA 67